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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

DECEMBER, 2001
VOLUME 23, NUMBER 10

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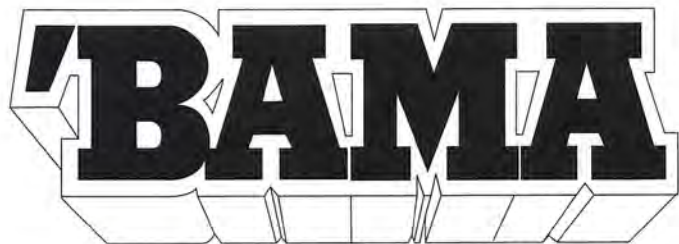
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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

DECEMBER, 2001

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 10

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Barry Fikes Photo



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Permanent Captains

Three juniors and two seniors have been selected as Alabama's permanent football captains for 2001. While the game captains each week were selected from the Leadership Council, the permanent captains were elected from the Leadership Council by the players. The permanent captains on offense are senior tight end Terry Jones, senior quarterback Andrew Zow, and junior quarterback Tyler Watts. The defensive captains are junior linebacker Saleem Rasheed and junior tackle Jarret Johnson.

Player Of The Week

Prior to this year's football game against Auburn, no Alabama player had been named Southeastern Conference Player of the Week on offense or defense. The impressive performance by quarterback Andrew Zow in that 31-7 blowout of the Tigers in Auburn gave Bama its first honoree.

Zow completed 22 of 29 passes for 221 yards and two touchdowns in Alabama's easy victory. Zow, Alabama's starter for most of the previous three seasons, was making his first start of the year because of a groin injury to Tyler Watts.

Although his career statistics did not figure into the weekly honor, Zow became the career leader in three passing statistics during the Auburn game. Going into the final regular season game of the year against Southern Miss, Zow had completed 452 of 833 passes for 5,893 yards. He also had 33 career touchdown passes, two short of the Tide record.

Zow started all four Auburn games in his Bama career and finished with a 3-1 record, including a 2-0 mark in Auburn. For his career he completed 62 of 101 passes for 591 yards and three touchdowns against the Tigers.

Robbins Adds Duties

Marie Robbins, who has been recognized for her diligence as Alabama's associate athletics director for compliance, has been given additional duties in the Crimson Tide athletics department. Alabama Director of Athletics Mal Moore appointed Robbins interim senior women's administrator (SWA) at Alabama.

"The SWA is the highest ranking female administrator involved with the conduct of an NCAA member institution's Intercollegiate Athletics program," Moore said. "Marie has done an outstanding job in our department and has an excellent reputation among the SEC and NCAA membership for her effective work here. She has worked tirelessly in her job and was instrumental in working with

other University officials who assembled our recent response to the NCAA."

Moore said Robbins would continue as compliance director.

Robbins replaces Debbie Warren, who has retired.

Robbins currently serves as chair of the NCAA Women's Gymnastics Committee. She had a distinguished gymnastics career at Alabama and was a member of the 1988 national championship team.

She graduated from The University of Alabama School of Law in 1993 and served at the SEC Office in compliance and academic affairs and coordinated the National Letter of Intent Program. She joined the Alabama staff in September, 1996, as director of compliance.

In The Polls

The Alabama men's basketball team opened this season in the nation's top 25, ranked 24th in the first week of the Associated Press poll. In the second week of the poll Bama moved up to number 22 and the Tide also made its first appearance in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll, also 22nd.

Last year Alabama was in the AP poll for 11 consecutive weeks, which bettered its previous best of five straight weeks in 1994-95. The highest regular season ranking for Alabama was fourth in 1974.

The highest Alabama has ever been ranked in a final national poll is fifth. The Rocket 8 team of 1956 finished fifth in both the AP and UPI polls. In 1987 Bama finished eighth in the final Coaches' Poll. Two other Alabama teams have finished in the final top ten, the 1976 team number six and the 1975 team number 10.

Two men on Alabama's basketball bench this season were players on some of Alabama's most successful teams. Head Coach Mark Gottfried was a senior on the 1987 team that finished ninth. His assistant coach, T.R. Dunn, was a player on the 1975 (sophomore) and 1976 (junior) teams.

And a memo to the NCAA selection committee, which left Alabama out of the NCAA Tournament last year citing a weak schedule for Alabama:

This year's Crimson Tide has a number of ranked teams on its plate, including fifth-ranked Missouri, which edged the Tide, 75-68, in the semifinals of the season-opening Guardians Classic, and 12th-rated Memphis, which Bama blasted, 81-70, in the consolation finals of that tournament.

The highest ranked team on Bama's schedule is fourth-rated Kentucky. Others are fifth-

ranked UCLA, sixth-rated Florida, and number 16 Temple.

Also in the polls, at the Southeastern Conference Media Days, Alabama took 15 of 23 first place votes in polling for this season's SEC Western Division championship and Tide junior guard/forward Rod Grizzard was selected pre-season All-SEC. Kentucky was a runaway winner of the pre-season conference poll.

Alabama's women's team was picked ninth in the SEC in pre-season media voting.

NBA Rosters Include Five From Tide

This year's NBA rosters include fewer players than has been the case in recent years. Bama had only five alumni on rosters of NBA teams on opening day. They are Jason Caffey (Milwaukee Bucks), Robert Horry (Los Angeles Lakers), Antonio McDyess (Denver Nuggets), Latrell Sprewell (New York Knicks) and Gerald Wallace (Sacramento Kings).

16 3-Pointers Would Have Tied Record

Alabama's school records are taken from official games. Were that not the case, the Tide men's basketball team's 16 three-point shots made in 33 attempts against Athletes in Action in a pre-season exhibition game would have tied the school record made in a December, 1996, game against Mercer (27 attempts).

Rah Rah Scott Scholars

When Robert "Rah Rah" Scott, the former Alabama player and assistant basketball coach, died of cancer in May 2000, steps had already been taken to perpetuate his memory and help families in need. Bama Coach Mark Gottfried and Scott's closest friends created a scholarship fund to help families who face the hardships that Scott's family faced as he fought the disease.

The outgrowth of that effort is the Robert Scott Foundation, and this year is awarding its first scholarships. One of those went to Robert Ramon Scott, Rah Rah's son. The others are Charles Wesley Johnson of Gadsden and Kaila Danielle Cooper of Russellville.

"I can't think of a better way for Robert to be remembered," said Gottfried. "He loved his own children and every player he ever coached. He would be proud to know that this foundation is allowing some kids who have gone through some tough, heart-breaking family times to have this opportunity, a scholarship to college. This foundation has been a labor of love for all of us, and it's exciting to see these outstanding young people become our first scholarship recipients."

The Robert Scott Scholarships will be awarded each June. For more information concerning the scholarship or to receive an application, contact Nannette Sheaffer at (205) 967-4745 extension 111.

Newton Keeps Working

Former Alabama Basketball Coach C.M. Newton keeps busy. Newton, 70, was head coach of the Crimson Tide 1969-80. He then served in the Southeastern Conference office, as head basketball coach at Vanderbilt, and as athletics director at his alma mater, Kentucky, before retiring over a year ago. He is a former president of USA Basketball, chairman of the NCAA Selection Committee, assistant Olympic coach, and was inducted last year into the Basketball Hall of Fame. And recently he was selected as chief executive officer of the World Basketball Championship, which will be held next summer in Indianapolis.

"C.M. Newton is one of the few truly towering figures in international basketball," said Ted Boehm, an Indiana Supreme Court justice and the tournament's co-chairman. The August 29-September 8 tournament will mark the first time the tournament has been held in the United States.

Kimani Has A Great Run

Although the final race of the cross country season was disappointing, Crimson Tide distance runner David Kimani had an excellent year. Kimani, who won the NCAA individual championship as a freshman (he was then at South Alabama), had to drop out of the NCAA race at Greenville, South Carolina, this year. Kimani was about two miles into the six-mile race and in the lead when he had to withdraw with an injured Achilles heel. Alabama finished 29th in the nation even without Kimani.

Kimani has placed first in every race in which he has competed for Alabama for the past two seasons. He has back-to-back SEC championships and back-to-back NCAA Regional Championships. Despite the heel problem that has plagued him much of the year, Kimani turned in a winning mark of 23:46.93 in the SEC Championships at Auburn. He led Bama to a second place finish in the SEC meet and to a first place spot in the NCAA Region, which was held at Alabama's home course.

Record Rounds

Alabama men's golf star Nick Rousey tied the Crimson Tide record round low score with a 64 in the first round of the Tournament of Champions in Knoxville in Bama's final meet of the season. He then set the Bama record 54-hole school record en route to winning the individual championship. Rousey shot 66 in the third round, putting that with the 70 he shot in the first

round and 64 in the second round to total 200, a ten under-par finish at the Cherokee Country Club.

Rousey won by seven strokes against three players who tied for second. Rousey's 54-hole total, bettered the 204 Mike Preston shot to win the 1976 Alabama Intercollegiate and the 204 current PGA tour player Steve Lowery totaled to win the 1982 Furman Invitational. Chip Deason also shot 64 for Alabama, turning in that effort in the 1977 SEC Championships.

"What can you say about Nick Rousey?," said Alabama Coach Dick Spybey. "He's been a solid player since he came to us last year. We knew this day would come but certainly his win was in grand style-200 strokes for 54 holes of play is remarkable. His physical game is certainly impressive but his demeanor and the way he represents The University of Alabama matches his skills on the golf course."

Alabama finished third among the 15 teams, its third top three finish in its four tournament appearances this fall. It gave Alabama a 37-12 fall record that included one tournament championship and a second place finish.

Rarity

Although some golfers may think the most unlikely thing in that game is making a birdie on the 18th hole for all the glory, the general perception is that a hole-in-one is the rarest of shots. Not so. It is the double eagle, three-under-par on a hole.

Clint Provost, a freshman on the Alabama men's golf team, had a double eagle in the first round of the Country Club of Louisiana Intercollegiate in Bama's final tournament of the fall.

"I'm very proud of the effort from our freshman Clint Provost who has had a wonderful first season so far," said Crimson Tide head coach Dick Spybey. "His round today included a double eagle on the eleventh hole, a 502 yard par five that he hit driver [then] four iron into the hole. That's a first in my coaching career. I can't recall ever having a golfer make a double eagle, I was really proud of him."

Johnston Gets Win

Alabama's women's gold team hosted its first tournament ever this fall, and senior women's golfer Sarah Johnston captured the medalist title at the inaugural Alabama Capstone Intercollegiate.

Johnston shot a three-day total of 231 to earn her first career tournament title. Prior to the Capstone, Johnston had posted four career runner-up showings. Johnston was one of only two players with three consecutive rounds in the 70s.

Tennessee, which is coached by former Tide star Judy Pavon, won the tournament.

One Stroke Is Big

Former Alabama golfer Spike McRoy will be able to look back over the past season and find a number of places where he could have made the upcoming year much easier. The top 125 money-winners on the PGA Tour retain full playing privileges for the next year. McRoy won \$401,654 and finished at 127, less than \$5,000 behind the player who finished at 125. Frustratingly, McRoy missed the cut by just one stroke in five tournaments. Just making one more cut would have propelled him into the top 125.

Fall Softball

The Alabama Crimson Tide softball team finished its fall practice by dominating an exhibition doubleheader against Central Alabama Community College, winning game one 22-0 and game two 15-0 in four and a half innings.

In game one, Tide pitcher Shelly Laird got the win. She faced 13 batters in four innings, striking out 11, including the first six. Even though Alabama led 13-0 after four innings and the eight-run rule would mean an end to the game, the teams decided to play a complete game and Bama scored nine more runs. The Tide had a total of 24 hits.

In game two, Erin Wright went four innings, collecting eight strikeouts to earn the win.

Jackie Wilkins and Jackie McClain led the way at the plate for the Tide. Wilkins went 6-8 on the day with five singles and a double. McClain went 5-6 with three doubles and five runs batted in.

Alabama's 2002 season begins February 1 with a three-game series against defending national champion Arizona in Tucson.

Volleyball Success

This was supposed to be a rebuilding year for the Alabama volleyball team of Coach Judy Green. However, Bama was a surprising success. The Tide finished 22-9 on the season and Alabama won its first ever game in an SEC championship meet. Bama defeated LSU in the SEC tournament after LSU had twice defeated the Tide in regular season play.

During the year Alabama freshman outside hitter Erin Heffner earned SEC Player of the Week honors for leading Bama to wins over Samford, Mississippi State and Ole Miss. Heffner and Jennifer Bibber were Crimson Tide selections for the All-SEC second team.

Soccer Honorees

Six Alabama soccer players were named to the SEC Academic Honor Roll this year. They are Michele Evans, Amada Lewis, Kathleen Motheral, Ellen Sanders, Danielle Watson and Kim Zarzour. Zarzour, a sophomore, had a perfect 4.0 grade point average in her study of communicative disorders.

Can Alabama Make It To A Bowl?

by Kirk McNair

Determining destination is more complicated in 2001

Bob Devaney, the legendary Nebraska head football coach of the 1960s and early 1970s, used to tell this story.

Following the 1965 season he got a telephone call from Alabama's Paul "Bear" Bryant suggesting the teams get together in the Orange Bowl. In what became a game for the national championship, Alabama triumphed 39-28. The next year, Devaney said, Bryant called about the two teams playing again, this time in the Sugar Bowl. The Kenny Stabler-led Crimson Tide destroyed the Cornhuskers, 34-7, to complete an 11-0 season. A couple of years later, Devaney said, Bryant called again, suggesting that since both teams were down a little that they just go to the Liberty Bowl. Devaney told Bryant that sounded good to him. Then, Devaney said, "As soon as I hung up the phone, I called the Sun Bowl and accepted an offer to play Georgia."

Things aren't as simple (or as advantageous for Bama) as in the days when Bryant was manipulating the bowls. Now there are all sorts of tie-ins and computer rankings instead of a phone call from one athletics director to another.

If Alabama lost its game to Southern Mississippi, which was to be played after our deadline, you may opt to not waste time reading this story. However, if Alabama was able to defeat the Golden Eagles, it would mean that Alabama had secured its sixth victory of the year and become bowl eligible.

And if Alabama is bowl eligible, some bowl will want the Crimson Tide, which would have finished regular season play with three consecutive wins, including a 31-7 rout of then 17th-ranked Auburn in Auburn.

(If Alabama did not become bowl eligible for a second consecutive year, Tide fans will have to console themselves through the winter, spring and summer thinking about the Tide's last victory of this season.)

Bowls like having Alabama. And it's not just because Alabama has gone to more bowl games (50) than any other school or that Alabama has won more bowl games (28) than any other. Bowls want teams that are good television fare, and Bama, which

2001 Alabama Football Results

Date	Opponent	Site	Central Time (TV)/Result
Sept. 1	UCLA	Tuscaloosa	17-20
Sept. 8	Vanderbilt	Nashville	12-9
Sept. 22	Arkansas	Tuscaloosa	31-10
Sept. 29	South Carolina	Columbia	36-37
Oct. 6	Texas-El Paso	Birmingham	56-7
Oct. 13	Mississippi	Oxford	24-27
Oct. 20	Tennessee	Tuscaloosa	24-35
Nov. 3	LSU	Tuscaloosa (HC)	21-35
Nov. 10	Mississippi State	Tuscaloosa	24-17
Nov. 17	Auburn	Auburn	31-7
Nov. 29	Southern Miss	Birmingham	6:00 (ESPN2)

Southeastern Conference Bowl Ties

Date	Bowl	Opponent	Site	Central Time (TV)
Dec. 27	Independence	Big 12	Shreveport	7:00 (ESPN)
Dec. 28	Music City	Big East	Nashville	4:00 (ESPN)
Dec. 31	Peach	ACC	Atlanta	6:30 (ESPN)
Jan. 1	Outback	Big Ten	Tampa	10:00 (ESPN)
Jan. 1	Cotton	Big 12	Dallas	10:00 (Fox)
Jan. 1	Citrus	Big Ten	Orlando	Noon (ABC)

Other Possible Bowl Berths For SEC Teams

Date	Bowl	Opponent	Site	Central Time (TV)
Dec. 19	Mobile Alabama	Mid-American	Mobile	7:00 (ESPN2)
Dec. 20	Tangerine	ACC	Orlando	6:30 (ESPN)
Dec. 20	Las Vegas	Mountain West	Las Vegas	7:00 (ESPN)
Dec. 28	Galler's Furniture	Big 12	Houston	12:30 (ESPN)
Dec. 31	Humanitarian	Western Athletic	Boise	11:30 (ESPN)
Dec. 31	Silicon Valley	Western Athletic	San Jose	2:00 (Fox)

BCS Bowls

Date	Bowl	Site	Central Time (TV)
Jan. 1	Fiesta	Tempe	4:00 (ABC)
Jan. 1	Sugar	New Orleans	7:30 (ABC)
Jan. 2	Orange	Miami	7:00 (ABC)
Jan. 3	Rose	Pasadena	7:00 (ABC)

has been televised more than any team save Notre Dame, ranks high in that regard. That's why 10 of 11 regular season Alabama games were on television this season. And bowls like teams that sell tickets and visit their cities. Alabama fans are legendary for following the Crimson Tide.

But it's a two-way street. A bowl game would be good for Alabama, too. Alabama Head Coach Dennis Franchione talks about his team being "a work in progress." A bowl game means that Crimson Tide players get additional practice time and Franchione and staff get more time to evaluate and experiment with personnel. Additionally, a team in a bowl game keeps that team's name in the newspapers and on television, part of the reason a bowl game is considered a boost in recruiting.

However, Alabama getting into a bowl game is not automatic.

The general success of the Southeastern Conference complicates matters for Alabama. Even though Bama has a few quality wins, such as those over Arkansas

and Auburn, the Tide will still have the worst record of the nine SEC teams that are bowl eligible. And Bama was the last SEC team to become bowl eligible. There is a possibility that the top two teams in the Eastern Division, Florida and Tennessee, will both make it into the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), the games that are picked by the combination of bowls and strength of schedule and computer rankings as devised by SEC Commissioner Roy Kramer a few years ago. Michigan's loss to Ohio State means that only one Big Ten team, Illinois, will be a BCS team, which helps Alabama.

In addition to (hopefully) Alabama, and Florida and Tennessee, bowl spots must be found for Arkansas, Auburn, Georgia, LSU, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

In addition to qualifying at least one team for the BCS, the SEC has contracts to provide one team for each of six bowls—Cotton, Citrus, Outback, Peach, Music City and Independence. Thus, for all bowl eligible SEC teams to make it into post-season play, spots must be found for at least one and

possibly two teams. This can be accomplished in one of two ways: finding a bowl that does not have two automatic selections or finding a bowl in which the conference contracted to provide a team doesn't have one available that meets the criteria. A complicating factor in that second scenario could involve the Big 12 getting a second team into the BCS, thus opening up a slot in one of their tie-in bowls.

There is no chance that Alabama will be in a BCS bowl or in the Cotton, Citrus, Outback or Peach.

Alabama played in the inaugural Music City Bowl, then played in Vanderbilt Stadium, in 1998. The game is now played in the Adelphia Coliseum. The Big East would provide the opposition in Nashville, which is an easy trip for most Tide fans.

Although the weather was awful and the beating administered to Bama by Virginia Tech even worse, the Music City is a good minor bowl. It is played December 28, which provides adequate additional practice time.

Most believe the Independence wants a team closer to Shreveport (LSU if it loses to Arkansas and/or Auburn or Arkansas or Ole Miss), although it's not a difficult trip for most Alabamians since Interstate 20 runs from Atlanta through Birmingham and Tuscaloosa and on into Shreveport.

University President Andrew Sorensen was guilty of a faux pas a few years ago in denigrating Shreveport as a bowl city, but it offers a couple of advantages over some other spots. For one, it is played December 27. For another, Alabama's recruiting territory for the time being includes that part of Texas a few hours beyond Shreveport on I-20, the Dallas-Fort Worth area from which most of the current Tide coaches came. And though it may seem unlikely, Shreveport has a reputation for putting on a very good bowl game for the players as well as the fans.

Because the SEC office does much of the negotiating for its member teams, it's difficult to make predictions on where a team might end up. There is also a fear that the SEC might be so concerned with getting Tennessee into the BCS mix that the team at the other end of the bowl chain, Alabama, could get left out.

If Alabama's chances are outside the SEC tie-in bowls, as appears probable, the two bowls considered most likely are the Tangerine and the Humanitarian.

The resurrected Tangerine Bowl was the original Citrus Bowl, then became the Micron PC Bowl, which was previously played at Pro Player Stadium outside Miami. It returns to Orlando this year under the same auspices of the Citrus Bowl. The game is played December 20, which includes a couple of disadvantages. One, Alabama's final examinations do not end until December 15 and

Bama has five players who will take part in graduation ceremonies on December 16. That early date also means fewer practice days and several of the practices adversely affected by final examinations.

The Tangerine Bowl takes the fifth pick of an ACC team and the fourth pick of a Big East team, but there was a chance that only three Big East teams would qualify. Ironically, the fourth Big East team attempting to get bowl eligible, Pittsburgh, will fail only by losing to Alabama-Birmingham. In that case, That ACC team appears to be Georgia Tech, Clemson, or Florida State. One can safely bet that Tangerine Bowl officials had crossed fingers cheering for UAB in hopes of landing Alabama.

There has been some talk of Alabama perhaps being placed in the Mobile Alabama Bowl, which pits a Mid-American Conference team against a Conference USA squad. Both leagues have bowl-eligible teams. However, the bowl has the option of replacing a Conference USA team with an at-large team if the Conference USA team has as many as four losses. However, late word had it that the bowl would not exercise that option and would take a Conference USA team.

Another bowl with a Conference USA tie-in and the same ability to drop a team with four losses is the Gallery Furniture.com

Bowl, which is played in the AstroDome in Houston on December 28. The bowl also has a tie-in with the Big 12. And beginning next year the bowl will be taking an SEC team.

Whereas the Mobile Alabama Bowl is in it for the long run with Conference USA and would be under pressure to take a representative from that conference, there would be no such pressure on the Gallery Furniture.com Bowl.

The Humanitarian Bowl is played later, December 31, a plus for practice time, but to some a disappointment in having to be away from home for Christmas. It does offer the "advantage" of no fans having to bother to pack golf clubs. Alabama has played in some cold bowl games before, notably all of its Liberty Bowl appearances and the Music City Bowl a few years ago, and a bowl game in Boise, Idaho, would seem to have the potential for another chilly day.

The Humanitarian Bowl has as host team a representative of the Western Athletic Conference. The other slot is an at-large opening.

The Las Vegas Bowl, played December 20, takes an at-large team to play a Mountain West host team. Most believe that bowl will select a West Coast team as the opponent, but last year the bowl had Arkansas (which was crushed by UNLV).

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Now It's A Waiting Game For Bama

by Kirk McNair

University hopes for final verdict to come in January

Speculation about Alabama's situation as the NCAA Committee on Infractions ponders the fate of the Crimson Tide football program is just that...speculation. Everyone involved is like Uncle Remus's tarbaby: it don't say nothin'. And so Alabama twists in the wind for a few more weeks or a few more months while the committee reaches a conclusion. The University, which pled its case in Indianapolis on November 17 somewhat with one hand tied behind its back, can only hope that the verdict will be a fair one.

The Alabama legal team was without one of its best assets, Faculty Chairman of Athletics Gene Marsh, a professor in Alabama's School of Law. The reason for Alabama being penalized in its hearing before the Infractions Committee by not being allowed to have its faculty chairman as part of its team is because Marsh also serves on the Infractions Committee. A rule that could exist only for the purpose of making those committee members more comfortable prohibits a university representative who is a member of that committee from sitting with his school unless summoned to answer committee questions.

Alabama was represented by President Dr. Andrew Sorensen, Athletics Director Mal Moore, Associate Athletics Director for Compliance Marie Robbins, University attorneys Stan Murphy and Glenn Powell, and Rich Hilliard, a former NCAA investigator who now represents schools against the NCAA for the Indianapolis law firm of Ice Miller. Hilliard was accompanied by two associates. Also appearing before the committee was former Alabama Recruiting Coordinator Ronnie Cottrell, although at least part of the charges against him had been dismissed prior to the hearing, and his attorney, Todd Vargo. Southeastern Conference Commissioner Roy Kramer was also present.

The hearing lasted about 10 hours and included a videotape message from Football Coach Dennis Franchione. Although none of the charges came against Alabama after Franchione became head coach, he was offered the opportunity to make his presentation. Additionally, he talked to the committee for about 30 minutes by telephone from Montgomery that morning. Franchione was excused from a personal appearance because he was to coach Alabama in its game against Auburn that afternoon.

No news was released by the participants. There was no comment from members of the Infractions Committee, although it was made known that the three representatives of the Enforcement Staff which presented the case

against Alabama were lead investigator Rich Johanningsmeier, Director of Enforcement Mark Jones, and NCAA Vice President for Enforcement Services David Price.

And about all Murphy, who represented The University before reporters, would say is that the meeting had taken place and that Alabama expects a verdict in January.

Soon, perhaps the first week in December, The University is expected to make public its response to the Infractions Committee. That information, as the original release of the 11 major and five self-reported charges against Bama's football program, will be redacted to remove information that might identify individuals. Cecil Hurt, sports editor of the *Tuscaloosa News* and the reporter who has the best sources on this story, hinted in a recent column that The University made "strong—and potentially explosive—arguments" to the committee.

It is impossible to speculate with confidence about such arguments. That the Enforcement Staff was incompetent? That would hardly be news, much less "strong" or "explosive." There was an unconfirmed report that in the meeting Johanningsmeier admitted he did not have proof of one of the charges he brought. The Enforcement Staff has a record of bringing charges without evidence.

Would The University argue that the NCAA's top witness on alleged wrongdoing in the recruitment of Albert Means in Memphis is not reliable? Again, hardly news. Milton Kirk, the former high school assistant coach who made the charge that Alabama booster Logan Young and former Tide Assistant Coach Ivy Williams, were aware of and/or took part in a payoff of \$30,000 or \$115,000 or \$200,000, depending on the story of the day, has been described in unflattering terms regarding veracity. The NCAA dropped the charge against Williams before the Infractions Committee meeting.

Is it possible there was a conspiracy that involved one or more other universities or their boosters? Well, we'll know soon.

Alabama learned something from its previous appearance before the committee if, indeed, The University legal team made a vigorous defense. One theory is that Alabama officials believe the penalties will fall into a "narrow range" regardless of whether the Infractions Committee comes down more on the side of The University or the Enforcement Staff.

Penalties should not reach catastrophic proportions because The University was not charged with either "lack of institutional control" or "failure to monitor" and two charges of "unethical conduct" against former assistant coaches were removed prior to the hearing. Additionally, former Head Football Coach Mike DuBose was never charged. It was also reliably reported that the Infractions Committee did not add to the charges brought by the Enforcement Staff.

Almost as difficult to discern as Alabama's argument is what penalties may have been self-imposed by The University and what the final result of the case will be. Considering the actions of the Infractions Committee in Alabama's first appearance before that body in 1995, prudence suggests expecting worse than the worst.

It is known that three boosters have been disassociated, even though it appears the NCAA has woefully weak cases regarding all of them. Ray Keller and Wendell Smith are boosters of North Jackson High School in Stephenson. The NCAA's contention that former prospect Kenny Smith of North Jackson received payments from Alabama boosters has been publicly denied by them, by Smith, and by others who admit to being involved in schemes by boosters of the high school to pay players. It is also not insignificant that the case falls outside the NCAA statute of limitations, brought into this investigation only by a ploy by the Enforcement Staff. Keller and Smith were reportedly banned from booster activities (notably the ability to donate money to The University athletics department) for seven years.

The case seems even weaker against Memphis booster Logan Young, who by all accounts cooperated in every way with the investigation. Nevertheless, The University disassociated Young for a period of "at least" five years. Although Young may not donate to the athletics department during his period of disassociation, The University is willing to take money from Young for legal fees in this case in exchange for a favorable dispensation of his status at the conclusion of five years.

The issue of scholarship reductions is the biggest one in the penalty phase. No one doubts that Alabama will receive penalties and no one doubts the penalty period will be less than two years, and most believe it will be for at least three.

Naturally, there have been wild guesses as to the extent of the penalties. A radio talk show host in Tennessee suggested Alabama would lose 50 scholarships. At one point prior to the meeting before the Infractions Committee it was suggested Alabama would self-impose a reduction of no more than 10 scholarships.

Alabama did offer to self impose scholarships, probably 15 and probably to be spread out over three years, along the lines of seven in the upcoming signing period which begins February 6, 2002; five the following year; and three in 2004.

It is also likely that Alabama will have reduced official visits in at least one of those years. A school is ordinarily allowed to bring in 56 prospects for official visits. It is also possible that Alabama will face a cutback in the number of coaches who can be on the road recruiting at one time. That limit is ordinarily seven and it would not be a surprise to have Alabama limited to six.

It is not expected that Alabama would face any penalties regarding post-season play or television exposure.

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Top Players Who Haven't Been Seen

by J.E. Lisby

Football help is on the way from Tiders held out in 2001

This was not a good year for Alabama football. Fourth-quarter breakdowns, overmatched defenders, few take-aways, and not a whole lot of good luck have combined to turn 2001 into a season of frustration, far below the level of play expected of the Crimson Tide.

But help is on the way.

Dennis Franchione believes in redshirting as many true freshmen as possible, stockpiling talent for the future. Holding players out their first year on campus and thus allowing time in the weight room, in meetings, on the practice field, and at the training table to show positive results, is hardly a new concept. But of the 15 eligible true freshmen signed last winter, only one (defensive end Todd Bates) saw 2001 game action.

BAMA profiles five of the best current football players most Tide fans have never seen.

FREDDIE ROACH

6-2, 236, Middle Linebacker

Tide Defensive Coordinator Carl Torbush has a reputation for recognizing and developing gifted linebackers. Last winter when Roach signed with the Tide, Torbush called him "as good a talent as I have evaluated," and that opinion hasn't changed. "Freddie can be an outstanding player," Torbush said. "If he continues to improve he's got a chance to be a very, very solid SEC linebacker."

Roach is a prototype for the middle linebacker position: tall, powerfully built, and fast enough to pursue from sideline to sideline. Tide coaches are excited about what they've seen. "Freddie has all the physical attributes necessary for a linebacker," said Tide Head Coach Dennis Franchione. "He's got size, speed and strength. He's got some hard-nosed, physical attributes about him, and he plays with a linebacker's mentality. As Freddie gets his feet under him, I expect him to be a leader in our program."

Roach was one of the few freshmen identified early as a possibility to play. Torbush said, "If I had known last summer what I know now, then he may have played earlier, because of some of the injuries that we've had. But now I'm glad we held him. Now he's got a chance to be a really good football player."

"I'm much better now than when I first got here," Roach said. "It's not like high school at all. It's a whole different atmo-

sphere. It's a lot faster, but I'm fortunate to be playing behind some great linebackers. All of them are looking out for me."

The Tide coaches are careful not to overhype a young player, but the Killen native will begin spring as the primary backup at middle linebacker. And if Saleem Rasheed is moved to another position (or forgoes his final year of eligibility), Roach could step in and start almost immediately.

BRODIE CROYLE

6-2, 195, Quarterback

The decision by Brodie Croyle to play football at Alabama lent national credibility to Franchione's first recruiting class. Despite losing his senior year of high school to a torn knee ligament, Croyle was rated the best prep quarterback in the country and he was the most publicized of last season's signees. "I don't know how you select the number one anything coming out of high school," Franchione said. "It's a little unfair to put a young man in that position. But Brodie has the tools to do it. He's got a good, live arm, good feet, and quickness."

John Croyle, Brodie's father, played for the legendary Paul "Bear" Bryant in the early 1970s, so there was no doubt which team the Croyle family cheered for on Saturday afternoons.

"Sitting out is difficult, because you want to be out there playing," Brodie said. "But we all know that redshirting is going to be better for our careers on down the road. I'm a lot better quarterback than last winter. When I first got here I didn't have a clue what was going on, but I'm starting to figure it out more and more every day."

If he hopes to challenge current starter Tyler Watts for the starting job in 2002, Croyle must accept his head coach's challenge and work hard in the off season, gaining bulk and strength to withstand the rigors of SEC play. But he already has an outstanding throwing arm, strong and extraordinarily accurate for a quarterback his age. "We're encouraged by his physical attributes," Franchione said. "In fact, we're not discouraged with anything about Brodie. I want to express my optimism, but I don't want anybody to think he's Joe Namath. At least not yet."

"There is a whole lot more to learn in college football than in high school," Croyle said. "I can't wait for when it's my time at the table. I'm anxious to show what I can do. But until that time I'm going to wait patiently."

That calm confidence reassures Franchione that his teenage quarterback will be fine by the time his college debut arrives next fall. "Brodie puts some pressure on himself, but I don't see 85,000 cheering against him or for him bothering him a whole lot," Franchione said. "He has a

steady, no-big-deal kind of mentality. He'll handle the change of helmets and the bright lights when the time comes."

CHARLIE PEPAH

5-11, 187, Cornerback

Along with Roach, Charlie Peprah has made the Tide staff's commitment to redshirting newcomers extremely hard to keep. As the difficult season wore along and the Alabama secondary continued to struggle, many a covetous eye was cast Peprah's way. Franchione said, "Every once in a while I would look down the sideline and think 'I need to put him in the game.' Because of his size and ability he could compete now."

It is Assistant Coach Chris Thurmond's job to do something about Bama's poor performance at cornerback. Thurmond said, "Obviously until a guy plays in a game it's hard to get real high or real low on him, but Charlie has got a tremendous upside. He's tall, really strong, and he's got good reach. Charlie understands the game, and he's a good open-field tackler. He's just got great football instincts."

The child of first-generation African immigrants, Peprah's family story is interesting. His grandfather was the President of Ghana, until a coup cost him his life, forcing Peprah's parents to flee the country. "Charlie is a class young man with real character," Franchione said. "He's very intelligent and was a great student in high school."

"I wouldn't say that redshirting has been difficult," Peprah said. "It's actually been a chance for me to keep improving every day. I'm different from most guys, I guess. I know when it's my turn, and my turn will come."

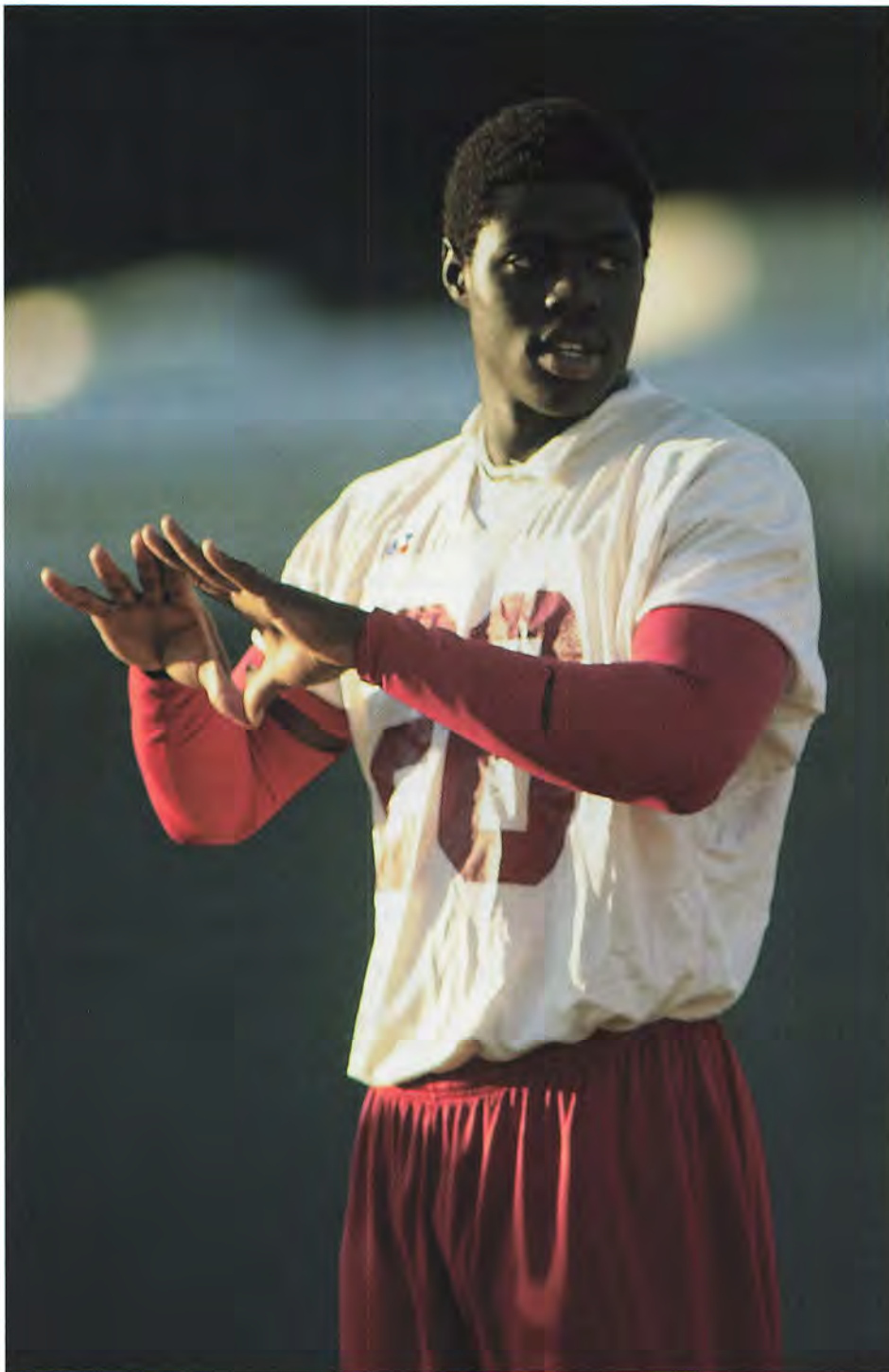
Had the coaches known in advance how the season would play out, Peprah is another athlete who might have been put on the field this year. As it is he'll have four seasons left to contribute at cornerback. "All the true freshmen are a close group," Peprah said. "All of us get together and talk about how next year we're going to do our thing and try to produce and contribute. I don't know if it's the coaches' philosophy or not, but we're building for the future among ourselves."

SHAUD WILLIAMS

5-8, 185, Tailback

Most of the redshirts are true freshmen, held out to mature physically during the first year of college. But Shaud Williams' situation is different. Franchione recruited Williams for TCU, but Williams selected Texas Tech, close to his home in Andrews. That first season Williams was outstanding, totaling more than 600 yards rushing and earning recognition as the Big 12 Conference's Offensive Freshman of the Year.

But at the end of his freshman season, Texas Tech dismissed Spike Dykes along



Charlie Peprah was held out in 2001, but the talented cornerback probably could have helped the Tide as a true freshman. He is expected to be a fixture in the Tide secondary for the next four years after being one of many freshmen who were redshirted this season. Barry Fikes Photo

with his run-oriented offense and brought in the pass-happy Mike Leach as head coach. And Williams could see the handwriting on the wall. With carries few and far between during his second season, his rushing average fell to less than 20 yards per game and the talented runner decided to transfer. Then, when Leach refused to release him to

any major school in Texas or Arizona, the decision to attend Alabama was easy. "I'm a Texas boy, but I came here with Coach Fran," Williams said.

Williams' ability rushing the football was well known in the coaching community, but Franchione had a trump card to play in this recruiting battle. Williams explained; "It

didn't take much. He just told me 'You've seen what Ladinian Tomlinson (the nation's leading rusher the last two seasons at TCU) did in our offense.' He wanted to give me a chance to do what 'LT' did, and that's all it took. I was pretty much convinced before he started."

NCAA rules governing transfers forced a redshirt season on Williams, but he has shown his talent working as the scout-team tailback. "Shaud brings speed, quickness and elusiveness," Franchione said. "And he's played two years of hard-nosed, Division I football. Next season I think he'll be the kind of athlete where we'll be asking 'How do we use him more in our offense?' Once we get him in the flow of things, he'll be special."

Williams said, "I have a little bit of power to me, but if I'm one-on-one with a linebacker, I'm not going to try to run over him. Occasionally, if I have to I'll lower my shoulder. But I'd rather put a move on than try to run somebody over. But I'm not just an outside guy. I'll stick it up inside if I have to."

More than one Alabama coach has speculated that had Williams been available this season, he might have made a difference in some early games.

ROMAN HARPER

6-0, 176, Cornerback/Free Safety

The final decision has not been made yet on whether to play Roman Harper at free safety or cornerback, but there is little doubt that with some added bulk the Prattville native should play early. "Roman has a lot of athletic potential," said Safeties Coach Ron Case. "He's got some height, and he's got the wheels."

Like many college defensive backs, Harper starred as an option quarterback in high school. "I think I'm making progress," he said. "I'm pretty sure I'll get a chance to turn some heads next year. I've just got to keep working and getting stronger in the weight room. I've put on a little weight this fall, but it's hard during the season. I'm looking forward to after the season when we'll work on weight lifting all the time."

"Roman has a lot of the same attributes that Charlie (Peprah) has," Franchione said. "The nice thing about both those guys is there is the potential right now that they can play either position. Really, what you want in a safety is a cornerback that is bigger. We want corners with some size, too, but when you've got safeties that are corners with size and hitting ability, then you're on to something."

Case agreed; "Roman is a smart kid—a conscientious kid who learns fast. He'll give us some quick help as a backup—if he doesn't take over somebody's starting job outright."

Franchione's long-range plan is no secret. Redshirt as many true freshmen as possible, building a solid foundation for future seasons. Harper said, "I hope it means we can stop all this losing. We have a lot of young kids and a lot of people coming back. Nothing against the older guys, but if we can get some new blood in here maybe we can turn things around."

He Could Be Key To Tide Success

by Kirk McNair

Gottfried counts on junior center to be even better this year.

You know Rod and you know Erwin, and now you know Mo. But do you know the key to the Alabama men's basketball season could very well be Kenny Walker? Head Coach Mark Gottfried said, "Kenny is the kind of guy we've been missing. He's skilled, he's intelligent, and he's coachable. I think he'll rise up for us this year."

Of course, Kenny Walker has not been missing. He's been around for a couple of years, and is one of the returning starters on this year's team. But this is a new, improved version of the Kenny Walker who started to blossom late last season.

Walker is one of four returning starters for Alabama this year, joining all-star candidates forwards Erwin Dudley and Rod Grizzard, along with guard Terrance Meade. The addition of freshman point guard Mo Williams gives Alabama an excellent starting team.

Alabama's primary problem is a lack of inside depth. But Walker has a "glass half full" perspective.

He said, "I know I'm looking at a lot of minutes this year. I think it's a great thing. But with that responsibility comes consequences. I have to be more focused on each game. I have to play good defense and stay out of foul trouble."

Walker knew that he would have to be in good shape this season and he prepared.

Gottfried said, "His first year he had an injury plus he was homesick. He just made it through the year. Last year he was playing and he improved; he got stronger and developed. More important, he matured. Instead of not being able to wait to go home, he couldn't wait to get started in our summer program, and he had a great summer. He was excited to be here. He worked hard and he improved his body. He's gotten stronger and in much better condition."

As for the playing rotation with only two proven inside players, Walker expects that he'll be the first inside player pulled. "I think they'll take me out and either drop Rod down or bring someone like Reggie Rambo in to play inside. After a few minutes I'll go back in and Erwin will get a break. You have to have a breather to keep your legs fresh. I'd guess that we'll play four or



Junior center Kenny Walker was a starter for much of his freshman year and in 34 of 36 games last year. This season the 6-8, 230-pound junior is expected to get plenty of playing time with Alabama being depth-short inside.

University of Alabama Photo by Kent Gidley

five minutes a half without me and four or five minutes a half without Erwin. But there will be games, like when we play Kentucky with all their inside depth, where we'll have to go longer."

This year, Walker said, "This team was close before the season even started. We know each other, we do things together, we're close-knit on and off the court. That's important for team chemistry."

He said, "I think defense will be a strength of a team this year. Last year we weren't always good defensively. Offensively, I think we'll run more than we have. The running game isn't just going down and jacking one up. It's finishing at the basket, getting the easy shots."

"Everyone on the team can shoot from outside, and that's going to open up the inside. Teams are really going to have to try to

stick us on defense. I spent the summer and pre-season working on shooting the three. If I play at the next level I'll be a small forward and I'll have to shoot from outside."

"The new guys (guards Mo Williams and Earnest Shelton) fit in perfectly. They're really going to help."

There are no seniors on the team other than Solomon Davis, a former walk-on who wasn't on the team last year, but came back this season to help with practice. Walker said, "The juniors have to be the leaders and provide the example to the younger players."

Walker is listed as a center with Dudley as the forward. Walker agrees with those designations, but said, "Coach doesn't like a center. He considers a center someone who sits under the basket. He wants a post player who can come out and shoot and who is active. We're sort of a two-forward, three-guard team."

He said, "Defensively, I have to be able to play against a big man, a power forward, or a quick forward. Ordinarily, I have a quickness advantage on a five (center), and he has bulk on me."

While Walker said he'd like to be big and quick, he said that while the big guy can establish position, the quick guy can get there. Most of the time I'd take quickness."

Kenny—he's actually Kenneth Walker IV—is easily spotted on the court. He's the guy with a dose of gray hair. He comes by it naturally as, he said, both his parents were prematurely gray. But until late last year, he was too often otherwise overlooked.

He stands out a bit more now, in part because of a good strength program. He was a slender 207 when he came to Bama, but now packs 230 muscular pounds on his 6-8 frame. Walker said he has benefitted from Alabama's strength program under Steve Martin. "In high school, [Coach Bruce Rosebrock] had us do some weight-lifting, but not like football players or wrestlers. Mostly off-season was conditioning, running on the track."

Walker's career has progressed gradually. "My freshman year I was hurt (a stress fracture in his shin) and it was late last season before I started producing," he said. "Early in the (2000-01) year Erwin and Rod were the ones getting it done, then late in the year I felt that Coach Gottfried was looking for me to produce, and I was comfortable with that. Coach and I had some conversations about me being focused and on me not worrying about making mistakes. After that, I started just playing. I tried to get rebounds.

When I had the shot I took it without thinking about it, just the instinct of playing the game. And I think I got more mature as the season went on."

Walker had earned a starting job early in the season of his freshman season, but missed 10 games after a 16-inch rod was placed into his left tibia.

Walker and his teammates were disappointed in not getting an NCAA bid last year. "We had battled so hard and we thought we'd be in it, and it was disappointing. But we took it as a life lesson. Now we know we have to win more games. I think Purdue, Detroit and Tulsa games were a starting point for this year's team since we have almost everyone back." Those three games were NIT contests. Alabama defeated Purdue, 85-77, in three overtimes and then in the semifinals at Madison Square Garden beat Detroit, 74-63. However, Bama fell to Tulsa (79-60) in the championship game.

In last year's NIT game at Purdue, Walker said, "We weren't going to give up. It was on the road and it went into triple overtime and those were the kind of games we had lost so often. It was big to win it. I could feel it on the court that we weren't going to lose. We wanted to go to New York."

Walker scored a career high 24 points at

Purdue. In the five-game post-season NIT tournament he averaged 10.2 points per game. Starting 34 of 36 games, he averaged 6.7 points for the season after having averaged 6.1 points per game in his abbreviated freshman campaign. Last year Walker hit 48.6 per cent from the field, including making the only three-point shot he took, and 73.9 per cent on free throws and had 164 rebounds (4.6 per game) and 23 blocked shots

Walker had an exceptional prep career, including winning one of the awards for best athletes in Florida (along with the likes of golfer Tiger Woods and tennis player Pete Sampras). He averaged 16 points, 11 rebounds and 6 blocked shots per game and led his team to the state championship game. He had 17 points, 12 rebounds and 5 blocked shots in that title game, but his team lost. However, Wolfson didn't lose often going 103-27 and winning three district titles.

While Walker thinks he is playing with the best inside player in the SEC in teammate Erwin Dudley, a near-unanimous choice for that position was Florida senior Udonis Haslem. While Walker will be going up against Haslem when Bama hosts the Gators on February 23, the two were once

teammates. Walker was a freshman at Wolfson High School in Jacksonville, Florida, and Haslem was a sophomore on that same team. The two alternated. "We were pretty close," Walker said. "He's a nice person. I don't see him much now." Haslem moved from Jacksonville following his sophomore year.

Walker is one of several Crimson Tide players who were recruited by the late Robert "Rah Rah" Scott. Walker nearly signed with South Florida following his prep career. "I wanted to be close to home," he said. "But my family said to take a look at other schools. I had been contacted by Florida, FSU, Georgia, and Tennessee, but I never really gave any of them a chance. I had my mind made up on South Florida. But Coach Scott convinced me to look at Alabama. I made an official visit and Alabama had everything I wanted. And the people here are so friendly. Everywhere we went people spoke to me, and that made a difference."

Walker is majoring in telecommunications. Like most Alabama basketball players, he hopes to continue his playing career after college. And when that's over, he doesn't want to be a sportscaster. He wants to be behind the scenes as a director.

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Slow Start May Mean Fast Finish

by Andrew Varble II

Patterson plans reverting
to championship strategy

In many respects, this sounds like a typical Alabama gymnastics team. The Crimson Tide returns a veteran squad, sporting five All-America performers among its 13 returnees. The schedule is packed with the nation's very best, including two clashes with UCLA, the defending NCAA championship team. It also includes home and away meets with Georgia, and those female Dogs bring out the best in Bama. In short, things are much the same as always for one of the best and most consistent teams in the history of NCAA gymnastics.

There is a twist though. This season, instead of packing up and heading out of town for the NCAA Championships, the championships are coming to Alabama. This April 18-20, for the third time in twelve years, the national championship will be decided in Tuscaloosa.

"Competing for an NCAA Championship is such a tremendous experience," Head Coach Sarah Patterson said. "We try to host it often enough so that each of our athletes gets the experience of an NCAA championship in Coleman Coliseum at some point in her career."

The last two times Tuscaloosa played host to the NCAA Championships, 1991 and 1996, the Crimson Tide managed to keep the golden trophy home. Alabama may be able to pull off that feat again this year, but the path to the title will be different than those the Tide has traveled the past two seasons.

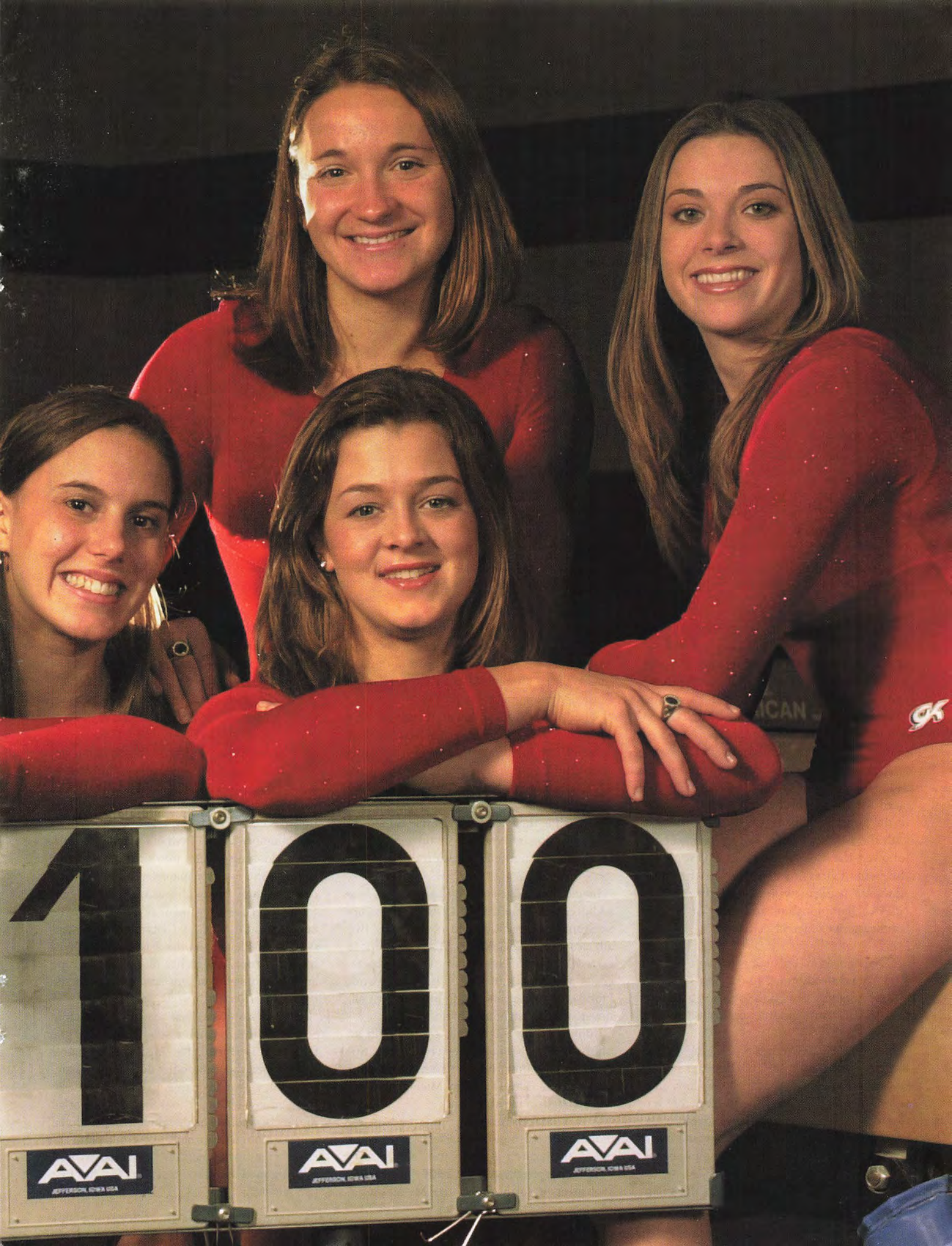
And there's another change in the works for Bama gymnastics.

Patterson said, "With the lineup we've got, we're going to start off slower than we have in

The 2002 Alabama gymnastics team features a number of returning All-America performers. They are (left to right): Front—Andrée Pickens, Reagan Tomasek, and Natalie Barrington; and Back—Kristin Sterner and Jeana Rice.

Barry Fikes Photo







Head Gymnastics Coach Sarah Patterson will be counting on senior Alexa Martinez to perform all-around for the Crimson Tide this year. Alabama has a plan to be competing for the national championship when the NCAA meet is held in The University's Coleman Coliseum in April. Barry Fikes Photo

the past few years. We're going to build throughout the season. Instead of bursting out of the gate and then trying to maintain that pace for the entire season, we'll start solid and add in elements until we're at full strength. There is a lot to be excited about this season and we're going to do great, but our fans need to realize it's going to be a slower start."

A slower start might seem strange to new Tide fans. The last two seasons Alabama has faced the nation's best by opening the season in the Super Six Challenge. Bama came away with the win both times. But those who have followed the Tide for a while will recognize the plan Patterson describes as the same Alabama used in winning all three of its NCAA Championships and three of its four Southeastern Conference crowns.

One reason Alabama is taking this slow and steady route to the post-season is to give a few Tide gymnasts a chance to ease back into the lineup after off-season surgery.

Two-time SEC Gymnast of the Year Andree Pickens is one of those. The Tide star had to sit out last year's NCAA Championships after tearing her Achilles heel the week before nationals. Alabama's coaching staff plans on bringing the all-star back slowly, giving her a chance to peak at the NCAA Championships in April.

Patterson said, "Not only is this the smart

thing to do for Andree, it's going to help us develop our depth. Some people are going to have to step up during the first part of the season. We'll be stronger later in the season because of this approach."

The Tide will be following a similar plan with freshman Michelle Reeser who tore her Achilles last spring. With a four-year career ahead of her, the Tide coaching staff will be equally careful with the Monroe, Louisiana, native.

And while there are a few on the Tide roster that are easing into the season, there are several ready to make a sudden impact on Alabama's fortunes.

In addition to Pickens, the Tide returns four additional All-America gymnasts to the lineup. Sophomore Jeana Rice was one of only two athletes at last year's NCAA Championships to earn All-American honors on all four apparatuses and in all-around. The Longwood, Florida, native became the fourth gymnast all-time to earn those honors in one season.

Junior Kristin Sterner has quietly built an impressive Alabama resume. Her seven All-America citations ranks seventh all time for the Crimson Tide. The Ionia, Michigan, native will compete in the all-around.

A two-time All-America in uneven bars, senior Natalie Barrington is on her way to being one of the greatest gymnast the Tide has ever had in that event. After working in the all-around as a sophomore, the Mississauga,

Canada, native could return to it this season.

After earning All-America honors last season in the balance beam, senior Raegan Tomasek is in fine shape to close out her career with a bang. The Mastic Beach, New Yorker, should see all-around action again this season.

Senior Alexa Martinez has come into her final season on a mission. The Austin, Texas native is firing on all cylinders and is likely to see all-around action at some point this season.

Sophomore Tiffany Byrd of Orlando, Florida, is also looking to step into the spotlight this season. She spent a majority of last season coming back from off-season knee surgery (anterior cruciate ligament repair). She made her debut at the NCAA Championships, stepping in for Pickens on the balance beam. Byrd has been relentless in her off-season training and should see plenty of action right off the bat for the Tide.

After a slow start last season, sophomore Stephanie Kite became a solid addition to the floor exercise lineup. The Austin, Texas native looks to add the vault to her duties this season. If it took Kite a few meets to hit her stride in the gym last season, it took her no time at all in the classroom. The daughter of professional golf star Tom Kite earned a 4.0 grade point average, earning Scholastic All-America as well as being named to the President's List her first two semesters.

Sophomores Erin and Lauren Holdefer of Northport became not only the first twins to grace the Tide's roster but also the first sisters. Both women made an impact on the Tide's vault lineup while Lauren also worked her way into the floor exercise lineup. Both have a chance to compete in floor and vault again this season.

Junior Sara Scarborough of Birmingham was on a tear on the vault last season until a nagging foot problem slowed her down. She has come back in great shape and is ready to again compete for a spot in the Tide's vault lineup.

Senior Whitney Morgan had foot surgery over the summer and has been working hard to regain her form on the uneven bars. The Kentuckian (Louisville) is another gymnast who will be looking toward working her way back into the lineup later in the season. Sophomore Helen Burgin is training in the all-around this season. The Birmingham native will be ready to step in and add depth for the Tide whenever and wherever she is needed.

Freshman Shannon Hrozek has come in ready to make an immediate impact on the Tide's lineup. The Woodlands, Texas, native is slated for all-around duty when the year gets started. Alabama's other rookie, Alexis Brion of Virginia Beach, Virginia, has been slowed in the pre-season with an old shoulder problem. The Tide coaching staff has been watching her closely and is bringing her along cautiously. When healthy, she is capable of making an impact on the Tide's all-around efforts.

For the third time in as many years, Alabama starts its season with the Super Six Challenge. The University of Florida hosts the meet this year. In addition to the Tide and the Gators, the 2000 and 2001 NCAA Champion UCLA Bruins, Georgia, LSU and Penn State will compete.

Alabama's schedule includes the always-electric home meet to kick off the Coleman Coliseum schedule against Georgia on January 18. Other home meets will have Bama hosting Nebraska (number five in the nation last year) and UCLA.

Bama will meet Auburn twice this season, the Tide's home meet in Birmingham on February 10 and at Auburn March 1.

The Southeastern Conference championship meet will again be in Birmingham on March 23.

The Tide coaching staff knows something about its craft. Sarah and husband David Patterson are beginning their 24th year coaching the Crimson Tide, a stretch that includes 19 straight NCAA Championship appearances (only Utah, with 20, has more) and 16 top four finishes during that run.

Going into this season, the Pattersons have coached 299 wins. In addition to averaging 13

wins a season and winning three NCAA titles, the Pattersons have coached Tide gymnasts to 117 first team All-America honors, 64 Scholastic All-America citations since the awards inception in 1991, and a conference-best 108 Academic All-SEC honors.

Alabama is also one of the best draws in collegiate athletics, averaging more than 9,400 fans a meet over the last six years.

"The Alabama team that faces UCLA at the end of the season will hopefully be a lot different than the one that faced them at the Super

Six Challenge," Patterson said. "By that time we'll have worked everyone back into the lineup and should be up to full strength. We're just going to have to be smart at the beginning of the season and bring this team along."

She noted that it's much more important to have a good finish than a good start.

"We want to build this team to the point that we're on the floor on the last night of the national championships with a chance to compete for the title," Patterson said. "If we get to that point, anything can happen."

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Tide Adds Quantity To Quality

by Andrew Varble II

Both men's and women's teams expect additions to result in even more success

Sometimes, less is more. The Alabama Track and Field Program proved that last year when it took three men to the NCAA Outdoor Championships and grabbed a fourth place finish, just three points shy of Alabama's first NCAA title.

This year, both the men and women's program have decided that more is more and that in track and field, the way to move ahead is to spread out.

"I think in the past, we've had a lot of quality athletes, but not enough quantity," said Men's Head Coach Harvey Glance. "We've added more depth in the sprint

area this year as well as bringing some throwers into the program. There are a few more distance runners and we're also bringing out a redshirt who will give us a pole vaulter and a good decathlete."

For the 2002 indoor season, the men will still have the services of one of the most decorated trios in Alabama's storied history. Five-time NCAA Champion David Kimani, coming off the heels of another stellar cross country season, will again be a threat to win any distance race he enters. Last year he won the 3,000- and 5,000-meter races at indoor nationals and earned

All-America in the 3000 and 5000 races indoors and 1500 and 5000 races outdoors.

Kimani will again be joined by Ron Bramlett, who earned All-America honors indoors in the 60-meter hurdles, then won the NCAA 110-meter hurdles during the outdoor season. Last summer, Bramlett represented the United States at the World University Games in Beijing, China.

Senior Miguel Pate will be available for duty during the indoor season only this year. The long jump specialist earned All-America honors both indoors and out-



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Glance cites the addition of junior Isaac Robinson and junior Gabe Warren as strengthening the Tide in jumps. Senior Brian Rohrer will compete in both the pole vault and the decathlon for the Tide this season. Junior Erroll Hickenbottom, a scorer in the triple jump at last year's SEC Championships, should again add depth in the jumps.

"We're an extremely well-rounded team this year," fifth-year Women's Head Coach Sandy Fowler said. "We're going to be strong in the sprints, relays, hurdles and jumps. We're going to be strong in the throws and distance events as well, but we're not going to be as deep as I'd like. I think we'll be fine at the SEC and NCAA

Fowler said from day one of her tenure that she intended for the Tide to be a bal-

Like the men, the women have added firepower to their lineup in addition to returning standouts from last season. After redshirting last year's outdoors season, All-America Petagay Gayle returns for her senior year. In 2000, Gayle finished third in

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Alabama track and field stars can expect help this year as both the men's and women's teams have improved depth. Still, in a sport that relies on world class caliber performers, the Crimson Tide has them. Among them are (left to right) Ron Bramlett, Nicole Ireland, Petagay Gayle, and Miguel Pate.

Barry Fikes Photo

season, she again earned All-America honors in the 400 hurdles.

During Gayle's redshirt year, sophomore Nicole Ireland joined the Tide and made an immediate impact. She finished runner-up in the 400 hurdles at the outdoors SEC Championships and earned All-America honors in the 400 hurdles and as part of the 400 relays. Those two women combine to give the Tide one of the best hurdle tandems in the nation. Ireland earned All-America honors as part of the 400 relay.

Senior Judyth Kitson also earned All-America honors last season as part of 400 relay. In addition to being available for relay duty, Kitson also competes in the long jump.

Newcomers LaTasha Pharr, Beau Walker and Jihan Trone all look to make an immediate impact on the Tide's sprint and hur-

dles fortunes. Sprint Coach Caryl Smith is especially excited about Pharr's versatility. Freshman Christy Fairley will look to break into the Tide's sprint and relay lineup. Returning for sprint duty will be sophomores Tee Carter and Marie Giles.

After redshirting the cross country season, All-SEC junior Ashley LaBudde should be ready to step up for first-year Distance Coach Steve Keith. Senior Aly Mills will be available in the distance events for the outdoor season. Sophomore Virnetta Greene showed vast improvement during the cross country season and she will be expected to carry that over to the track this year.

Senior Bobbette Stewart will be available for the indoor season only and is looking to go out in style with a strong showing in the 800.

In the throws, junior Natalie Kinion fin-

ished second at the SEC Championships last year in the javelin. Junior Naomi Elliott also scored at the conference level in the throws, garnering points in the shot put.

The Tide has a pair of athletes pulling double duty again this year. Basketball standout Shun Hunter and volleyball ace Erin Price will again help the Tide out in the outdoor jumps. Hunter scored in the triple jump at last year's SEC Championships while Price made improvement in the high jump.

The Tide also added a pair of pole vaulters to its lineup. The event has only been competed at the NCAA level for a handful of years and freshmen Lauren White and Sarah Soule will be the first to compete the event for the Tide.

Both the men and the women will start the indoor season at the SEC Quad Meet January 18-19 in Fayetteville, Arkansas.



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Four Men's Basketball Players Sign

by Tim Watts &
Kirk McNair

Winston gets away, but still good year for basketball; other sports also add stars

An evaluation of the early signing period for the Alabama men's basketball team of Coach Mark Gottfried would probably be "good, but not great." Bama certainly filled some needs. With only two current scholarship post players, Erwin Dudley and Kenny Walker, the Tide staff was looking for talented big men, and landed three of them. But, "the one that got away" was a big fish.

The early signing period for winter and spring sports, November 14-20, resulted in good news for Alabama in many areas. However, because Alabama cannot release signees until all paperwork is received by The University, there are some early signees who have not yet been announced. The women's basketball team of Coach Rick Moody reportedly had a few signees, including the top prep player in Alabama, Kate Mastin, a 5-10 guard/forward from Boaz, but no women's basketball signees have been officially reported.

The most-watched spot in the early signing period is men's basketball. Bama added three inside players 6-8 or taller and one wing player. The Tide basketball newcomers are prep stars Evan Brock and Chuck Davis and junior college transfers Rodney Bias and Emmett Thomas.

The bad news is that the state's top prospect, 6-6 Kennedy Winston of Blount High School in Mobile, elected to sign with California. There were varying degrees of opinion as to how much influence Winston's AAU basketball connections played in his selection of Cal. Bama also lost out on another big man who had considered the Tide, Julian Terrell, a 6-8 power forward from Ezell-Harding High School in Nashville, Tennessee, selected hometown Vanderbilt over the Crimson Tide.

Evan Brock, who committed to Alabama after officially visiting in September, is a 6-9, 190-pound forward from Lassiter High School in Roswell, Georgia. Last year he av-



Evan Brock



Chuck Davis

eraged 15 points and 10 rebounds per contest. His stock rose during the summer while playing with the Georgia Jazz AAU team. A two-sport athlete, Brock also finished third in the state track and field championships in the triple jump with a jump of 43 feet. He chose Bama over Mississippi State, Clemson, and Wake Forest. Brock is a solid student and is expected to be fully qualified.

Gottfried said, "Evan has great potential. He's a versatile player at 6-9 who can play inside and outside. I think he's a player who can play at a number of different positions. We feel like Evan has got great basketball savvy. He understands the game very well. Because of that I think he's going to be a very good player over the course of his career. His best basketball is out here in front of him."

Chuck Davis is a 6-8, 230-pound power forward from Southside High School in Selma who was the number two prospect in Alabama this year. Last year he led his team into the playoffs by averaging 25 points, 11 rebounds, and 8 blocked shots per game. Davis has shown constant improvement throughout his high school career, and while playing AAU ball last summer he earned the reputation as a national top 100 prospect. He picked Bama over LSU and Auburn. With a 3.7 GPA and 19 ACT he was both all-state and academic all-state.

Gottfried said, "Chuck is an inside player who's got good skills. He's got a nice body to work with. He is really going to benefit the next few years by our strength program. He's a hard worker. He's a good rebounder. He can step out and shoot the ball from the perimeter which is good for a big player."

Two years ago while playing at John Carroll High School in Birmingham, Emmett Thomas was a highly-regarded wing player who helped his team to the 5A state championship game. Despite losing to Wilcox-Central, Thomas was 5A player of the year, earned all-tournament honors and a scholar-

ship to the University of South Alabama. While working his way into the starting rotation for the Jaguars, Thomas, 6-5, 205, who is capable of playing either the shooting guard or small forward position, averaged 10 points and 4 rebounds per contest. After his solid freshman campaign he transferred to Beville State Junior College in Jasper and reopened his recruitment. During the early part of his sophomore season he has already displayed his scoring ability, scoring 36 points against Northeast Mississippi Junior College. He considered Ole Miss, UAB, and a return to South Alabama signing with Alabama. He has two years of eligibility remaining and is expected to be a full qualifier.

"Emmett has proved that he can play at the Division I level," said Gottfried. "He had an outstanding year at South Alabama and has continued to play well at Beville State. He will play hard. He's got good skills and he will be a great defender for us also."

Last year one of the most sought after junior college prospects in the nation was Shelton State Community College power forward Rodney Bias. Bias, a 6-9 post player from Livingston, averaged 20 points and 18 rebounds per game and earned Junior College All-America. Last spring he signed with Alabama after also giving consideration to Georgia and Ole Miss. But after failing to meet transfer requirements he re-enrolled at Shelton and is expected to be qualified.

"We made a commitment to Rodney last year when we signed him," said Gottfried. "Our plan is for Rodney to enroll at Alabama next semester, practice with the team, benefit from our weight room and conditioning program all spring and summer, and then play in the fall. Rodney still has some academic work to complete, but our hope is that he can join us next semester."

The baseball team of Coach Jim Wells has made good use of the early signing period in recent years, and the Crimson Tide added six signees in the early period. These players will report next fall and be eligible in 2003.

The new baseball signees are:

Ryan Beagle (5-9, 175) is currently enrolled at Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa, where he plays for former Alabama pitcher Bobby Sprowl. Beagle is a left-handed pitcher and outfielder with the Buccaneers. Prior to enrolling at Shelton State, Beagle attended Hueytown High School.

Evan Bush (6-2, 190) is one of the state's top high school prospects. He plays second base, third base and is a right-hand pitcher

at Gadsden's Southside High School for Coach Scott Calhoun. Named to 2001 *Birmingham News* Super All-State team after his junior season, Bush compiled a 10-1 record and 1.06 ERA with 111 strikeouts in 72 innings for the Class 5A state champion Panthers. In addition, he batted .416 (47-for-113) with five home runs, 37 RBI and 47 runs scored. Bush was a high school teammate with former UA signee, Eric West, who was drafted in the fifth round last year by the Boston Red Sox. Bush has also participated in the Alabama High School Athletic Association All-Star week and led his team to three straight Etowah County Championships. Bush was a member of the USA Gold Medal winning team at the 2000 Youth Nationals. He has also played for East Cobb Yankees (1998-2000) and Team Florida (2001).

Billy Hogan (6-3, 190) is one of the top infield prospects in the state of Texas. A three-year starter at shortstop for Coach Fred Howard at Newman Smith High School in Carrollton, Texas, Hogan is listed as the number five prospect in the Lone Star state. *Baseball America* rates him as the nation's 45th best prospect and fifth best shortstop. He attended Team One Prospects camp this past summer in Long Beach, California, which also ranks him 45th in the nation. Hogan was also a member of the 1999 Team USA Youth National Team, 1998 CABA National Championship team, 1999 Police Athletic League National Champions, and three district championship teams in high school.

Charlie Lyons (6-3, 205) is starting catcher for Coach Roger Haynes at Tuscaloosa County High School. Lyons batted .333 and posted a .978 fielding percentage as a junior at TCHS. He also plays first base for the Wildcats. He has been a member of the varsity baseball team for the past two years.

Brian McCann (6-2, 180) is considered one of the top high school prospects in the nation. The left-handed, power-hitting catcher batted over .500 and hit 12 home runs last year as a junior at Duluth (Georgia) High School. McCann recently attended Team One Camp in Jupiter, Florida, where he was rated as the seventh-best prospect and the second-best prospect among non pitchers. He was also listed the top catching prospect. *Baseball America* rates McCann as their 54th best prospect and the number-two catching prospect in the country. He is expected to be a high professional draft pick.

Allen Ponder (6-4, 200) is a right-handed pitcher from Auburn's Lee-Scott Academy. He is listed as the number one pitching prospect in Alabama and is rated as the nation's 34th best player by *Baseball America*. Last summer he was the winning pitcher for



Evan Bush



Charlie Lyons

the East Cobb Yankees in the championship game of the Connie Mack World Series in Farmington, New Mexico, and was named to the all-tournament Team. In addition, as a junior at Lee-Scott Academy, Ponder batted .605 with 14 home runs and 43 RBI in addition to his mound duties. He was named to the *Birmingham News* Super All-State team last year.

Gymnastics Coach Sarah Patterson announced the signing of Mari-Christine Bayer (San Jose, California, Lynbrook High School), Dana Filetti (Chesapeake, Virginia, Nansemond-Suffolk Academy), Dana Pierce (Advance, Indiana, Western Boone) and Larissa Stewart (Healdton, Oklahoma, High School) to national letters of intent.

"Because we're replacing five seniors, this is the culmination of a year-and-a-half of work and a lot of travel during the summer," Patterson said. "I don't feel like it could have turned out any better. These young ladies are talented and dedicated, and they're all accomplished, elite athletes with international experience."

Filetti was one of the most highly-recruited gymnasts this year, and for good reason. In her first year as an international elite gymnast, the U.S. Senior National Team member qualified for the World Championships where the team took home the bronze medal. The 2000 U.S. Challenge champion also placed in the top-10 at this year's Parkettes Invitational, U.S. Classic and U.S. Championships. Filetti trains at Excalibur Gymnastics, the same club that produced current Tide freshman Alexis Brion. She is coached by Jim and Dena Walker. Her sister, Mara, is a freshman at Alabama.

Pierce led the 2000 Region 5 All-Star team to a silver medal in international competition in France. A member of the U.S. National Team, she placed fourth in the all around at the 2000 U.S. Classic. She was a member of Bela Karolyi's pre-Olympic training group. A multi-sport athlete, Pierce was undefeated in diving in regular season as a

junior. In track and field, she competed in the long jump, winning the sectional and conference championships. The National Honor Society vice president ranks in the top 15 per cent of her class and was voted this year's "Miss Congeniality." Pierce trains under Peter Zhao at DeVau's School of Gymnastics.

While Bayer started gymnastics a little later than most, at age 10, she has moved through the levels of age-group competition with ease, moving into international elite last year. At the 2001 USA Championships, she finished 15th in the all-around and eighth on the uneven bars. At the 2001 Classics for International Elites, she finished ninth in the all-around, fifth on the uneven bars and sixth on the vault. In her first year as a Level 10 gymnast, Bayer was the national floor exercise champion and she finished fourth on uneven bars and fifth in the all around. She has been invited to attend two training camps under the famed Bela Karolyi. She has a 3.97 GPA. She competes for Diane Amos and Chris Swircek at West Valley Gymnastics.

Stewart will be the first Alabama gymnast from Oklahoma. The 2001 U.S. Classic and U.S. Championships qualifier has a 3.92 GPA. Stewart is a member of the U.S. National team and took ninth in the all around at the 1999 John Hancock Classic and placed 13th at the 2000 American Classic/Challenge in Reno, Nevada. She trained under Bea Fox and Jenny Ester-Rowland at the Bart Conner Gymnastics Academy.

The women's tennis team of Coach Jenny Mainz has added three new performers, two from Alabama and one from Canada. The new Tiders are Melissa Minor of Vestavia Hills, Ashley Bentley of Montgomery, and Robin Stephenson of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

At Vestavia Hills High School, Minor was the 6A singles champion in 1999 and in 2001. Vestavia Hills won the state championship in 1999. That year Minor was also runner-up in doubles.

Bentley plays for Coach Jill Clark at The Montgomery Academy, and is also trained by Andy Waid and Geoff Waring at the O'Conner Tennis Center. Her school has won five straight state championships and she also played for the state championship basketball team. She was *Montgomery Advertiser* Player of the Year.

Stephenson, who plays for Coach Pierre Lamarche at Resurrection Catholic High School, is a three-time Canadian national champion in doubles competition. She has had fourth and fifth place finishes in singles. She was named Kitchener Athlete of the Year.

Tide Seeks Skill Players Nationwide

by James Edwards

Alabama takes advantage of national name this year

Alabama has a national football reputation, even though the Crimson Tide has built its program primarily with in-state players. The out-of-state talent which has bolstered the Crimson Tide in the past has come primarily from the surrounding states of the Southeast.

Now Alabama has a coaching staff that appears to be interested in taking advantage of Bama's national name recognition, not to mention the recruiting contacts the Alabama coaches have outside the Southeast. The Tide staff is looking coast-to-coast at some of the nation's top prep players. We have previously spotlighted the skill position players and the big men from Alabama high schools and the big men (linemen, tight ends and linebackers) from the rest of the nation.

Here are some of the top skill players from around the country who have been linked to Alabama. Players are listed alphabetically by state.

ARKANSAS

Anthony Jones is a 5-9, 178-pound, 4.6 (40-yard dash time) cornerback from El Dorado High School who was first team all-state. He is one of those performers who plays faster than his timed speed. He had 108 tackles, eight interceptions, eight fumble recoveries, four caused fumbles, and seven pass breakups last year. Schools mentioned with him are Memphis, Alabama, Arkansas State, Tulsa, and Louisiana Tech.

CALIFORNIA

Mark Guillon, a 6-4, 186, 4.85 quarterback from Miramonte High in Moraga, hails from the same school that produced present Miami Hurricanes signal-caller Ken Dorsey. He is a pure drop-back passer who is still maturing. He was the North Coast Section Offensive Player of the Year last year after passing for over 2,200 yards with 28 touchdowns, 10 interceptions, and a 59 per cent completion rate. He was league champion in the 110 and 300 hurdles. He has camped at Alabama and



Mark Guillon

USC. He has a 31-inch vertical jump, 3.0 grade point average, and a 970 SAT. He benches 185 and squats 235. He is leaning to Miami and may be committed to the Hurricanes. USC, LSU, Tennessee, and Alabama are also interested.

Mark Gutierrez, a 6-4, 210, 4.8 quarterback from De La Salle High in Concord, has started every game since his sophomore season and has never been defeated. He is the nation's top signal-caller by some publications. He passed for 1,694 yards, 23 touchdowns, and 4 interceptions last year and had a 54 per cent completion rate. He also rushed for 200 yards and nine touchdowns. He is being courted by Notre Dame, Michigan, Miami, USC, Stanford, California, Oregon, UCLA, and Alabama.

Vincent Mays, a 5-11, 185, 4.47 athlete from Johnson High in Sacramento, can play runningback, quarterback, receiver, cornerback, or free safety. He finished his junior year with 1,569 yards and 27 touchdowns on offense, but most feel his future is at cornerback. He is a bump-and-run specialist who plays very aggressively. He had 70 tackles and six interceptions last year. He has listed Arizona State, Washington, San Diego State, and Alabama as schools of interest.

FLORIDA

Gavin Dickey, a 6-0, 190, 4.4 quarterback from Lincoln High in Tallahassee, took over the starting job midway through his freshman year and hasn't relinquished it. He led his team to the state championship as a sophomore, and had a very productive junior campaign. He had 638 yards passing as a freshman, 1,297 as a sophomore, and over 2,500 yards total offense last year and was all-state. He is also a major league baseball prospect. He is already qualified and is considering Notre Dame, Florida State, USC, Nebraska, Alabama, Miami, Florida, Georgia Tech, Clemson, and Syracuse.

Venice Gilliam, a 6-0, 185, 4.5 cornerback from Rickards High in Tallahassee, has raised his stock with every game since his junior year. He posted 105 tackles, 13 pass breakups, and two interceptions last year. He has a 3.2 GPA and a 22 ACT. He is getting inquiries from Tennessee, Georgia Tech, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida State, North Carolina State, LSU, Kentucky, Florida, South Carolina, and USC.

Andre Jones, a 6-0, 185, 4.4 athlete from Choctawhatchee High in Fort Walton Beach, has played strong safety, free safety, cornerback, wide receiver, and runningback. He led the county in tackles and also has five interceptions. He averaged 7.0 yards per carry on offense. He has offers from LSU and Kentucky, and also is linked to Alabama, Auburn, and Illinois.

Mikhail Kornegay, a 5-9, 180, 4.4 cornerback from Madison County High in Greenville, is a punt and field goal blocking specialist. As a senior he played both offense and defense. In nine games as a senior he produced 300 yards and four touchdowns, while on defense he amassed 50 tackles and four interceptions. He has also blocked four punts and one field goal. He benches 385 and is already qualified. He favors Alabama over Marshall, West Virginia, Connecticut, Colgate, and Fordham.

Greg Threat, a 6-1, 185, 4.5 cornerback who is also from Lincoln High in Tallahassee, is expected to see the playing field as a college freshman. He had 90 tackles, 12 breakups, and five interceptions last year. He is a three-year starter who has a 3.0 GPA. He likes USC, Notre Dame, Syracuse, LSU, Miami, Alabama, and Georgia Tech.

Check In On The Crimson Tide Every Day!

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Pat Watkins, a 6-4, 185, 4.45 free safety who is also from Lincoln, is considered by some to be headed for linebacker as a college player. He had 127 tackles, 17 pass breakups, and five interceptions last year. He is an all-state selection who will be eligible. He is linked to Florida State, Miami, USC, LSU, Arkansas, Georgia, Georgia Tech, and Alabama.

GEORGIA

Kenny Irons, a 5-11, 180, 4.45 runningback from Dacula High, is from a very athletic family. His father, David, played at North Carolina A&T and in the NFL with the Detroit Lions. Other family members who have played college ball are Gerald Irons (Michigan, NFL), Jarrett Irons (Michigan), Grant Irons (Notre Dame), Paul Irons (Florida State), and David Irons, Jr (Auburn). Kenny rushed for 1,100 yards and 15 touchdowns last year while splitting time with his brother David Irons. He has committed to South Carolina but is showing enough interest in Alabama that he made an unofficial visit.

ILLINOIS

Marquis Johnson, a 6-4, 200, 4.49 wide receiver from Centennial High in Champaign, is ranked as one of the top six receivers in the country. He posted 45 receptions for 865 yards and 11 touchdowns last year. He has a 42-inch vertical jump. He has also played runningback and scored a touchdown. And he's a good basketball player. He is qualified and is looking at Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Alabama, Michigan, Miami, and Illinois.

LOUISIANA

Nick Cannon, a 6-3, 198, 4.5 quarterback from Hahnville High in Boutte, is a classic drop back passer who has the ability to throw for a high percentage. But he has the speed to take off with the ball and make big plays. He is athletic enough to play another position in college if necessary, but his heart is at quarterback. He should qualify and he has very good strength. He favors Tulane over Alabama, Tennessee, LSU, and Southern Miss.

Skylor Green, a 5-10, 180, 4.3 cornerback from Higgins High in Marrero, is a runningback in high school who is expected to move to cornerback in college. He runs a 10.5 100 meters. He has committed to LSU, but made an unofficial visit to Alabama.

Ivan Stevenson, a 6-2, 190, 4.5 defensive back from Barbe High in Lake Charles, is a steady cover man also known for his jarring hits. He was credited with 60 tackles last year. His exact position in college is not certain. He can play all the secondary positions, but his tackling ability may lead him to strong safety. He is looking at LSU (favorite), Georgia, Texas A&M, Texas, Auburn, Tennessee, and Alabama.

MISSISSIPPI

Jamal Pittman, a 6-2, 225, 4.6 runningback from Columbia High, stars in the famed Notre Dame Box offense and last year at fullback he posted 1,482 yards and 20 touchdowns on 193 carries. His senior year he has moved to the tailback position so he can receive the direct snap. He has the capability of throwing the ball, but his wheels are where he makes a living. He compares himself to a combination of Eddie George and Ahman Green. Through 11 games as a senior and entering the second round of the playoffs, he has bulled his way to 2,425 yards and 30 touchdowns. He has a 2.3 GPA and is awaiting his test score. He benches 315, has a 40-inch vertical jump, and camped at Alabama. Miami, Ole Miss, Southern Miss, Alabama, LSU, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi State, and West Virginia are involved.

NEW MEXICO

Kole McKamey, a 6-2, 190, 4.5 quarterback from Artesia High, camped all around the country this summer. His stops included the Nike Camp (San Diego, California), Alabama, Arizona State, Oklahoma, Purdue, Colorado, and Marshall. He has played quarterback as a sophomore and senior, while he moved to a slot receiver last year. He runs a 10.7 100 me-

ters and he anchors the state champion 4X100 relay team. He also placed fifth in the high jump. A qualifier, he is linked with Texas Tech, Arizona State, Marshall, Alabama, Purdue, Oklahoma, and Colorado.

NORTH CAROLINA

A. J. Davis, a 6-0, 175, 4.3 cornerback from Northern Durham High, is considered the number one defensive back in the South. He has the speed and athleticism (38-inch vertical jump). Moreover, he has proved to be an exceptional one-on-one cover man. He is also the National Junior Olympic long jump champion with a leap of 25-2. He is listing his top five as Notre Dame, Alabama, Florida State, North Carolina, and North Carolina State.

T. A. McClendon, a 6-0, 219, 4.44 runningback from Albemarle High, has the national record for career scoring with 142 touchdowns (33 as freshman, 30 as sophomore, 44 as junior, and 35 as senior through eight games). He had over 6,000 yards and 107 touchdowns entering his senior year. His junior year he had 2,196 yards and 44 touchdowns. He is looking at Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Auburn, North Carolina State, and Michigan.

OHIO

Charlie Vample, a 6-1, 180, 4.5 wide receiver from Reading High in Cincinnati, in only his second year of football has made a name for himself. He has shown an ability to go deep and make big plays, but he also is adept at taking the short underneath route and breaking it the distance. He had 32 receptions for 710 yards and eight touchdowns as a senior. That is an average of 22.2 yards per catch. He also is a speedy return specialist who had 11 kickoff returns for 406 yards, two touchdowns, and an average of 36.9 yards per return. He returned 15 punts for 269 yards, two touchdowns, and an average of 18.0 yards per return. He has a 2.45 GPA and made 14 on his first ACT. However, since then he has enrolled in an academic enhancement class

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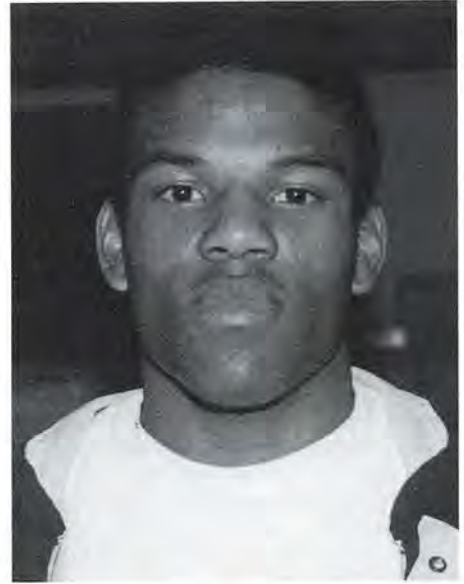
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Ronnie Osborne



Albert Hardy



Vickiel Vaughn

and on his practice test made 19. He benches 215 and is planning visits to Alabama (leader), West Virginia, Cincinnati, and Indiana.

Deshaun Wynn, a 6-1, 215, 4.33 running-back also from Reading High, is one of the premiere tailbacks in America. He rushed for

2,150 yards and 31 touchdowns last year (9.0 yards per carry) despite missing the first four games due to the transfer rule. In his first game last year he raced for 465 yards and seven touchdowns on just 23 carries. He runs a 10.6 100 meters and a 22.0 200 meters. As

a senior and he rushed for 2,283 yards and 30 touchdowns. He benches over 300 and should qualify. He is considering Michigan, Alabama, West Virginia, Florida, Ohio State, Penn State, Purdue, Indiana, and Pittsburgh.

OKLAHOMA

Jason Carter, a 6-0, 180, 4.3 cornerback from Jenks High, is ranked fifth in the nation at his position. He has great speed, but plays physical football, challenging receivers at the line of scrimmage. He is expected to be academically eligible. He lists Alabama, Oklahoma, Kansas State, Nebraska, and Tennessee as his top five.

Ronnie Osborne, a 6-2, 215, 4.45 running-back from Piedmont High, raced for 2,050 yards and 27 touchdowns as a sophomore, and followed that with 2,132 yards and 36 touchdowns as a junior. Through his junior year he had 4,200 career yards and 63 touchdowns. He has added to that total with 1,500 yards and 17 touchdowns through eight games of his senior year. He is considering Alabama, Florida, Nebraska, Notre Dame, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Kansas State, Missouri, and Kansas.

TENNESSEE

Ruben Mayes, a 6-1, 240, 4.5 fullback from Ridgeway High in Memphis, made all-state last year after rushing for 1,600 yards and 20 touchdowns. He plays tailback in high school but will probably move to fullback in college. He vertical jumps 29 inches, has a 2.2 GPA, and a 21 ACT. He benches 345 and squats 500. He has camped at Tennessee and Memphis. Those two along with Florida, Georgia, LSU, and Alabama have his interest.

TEXAS

Willie Andrews, a 5-10, 185, 4.43 cornerback from Longview High, is ranked among the top six cornerbacks in the nation. He has speed, intelligence, and leaping ability (38-inch vertical jump). He played wide receiver last year and had 40 receptions for 800

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yards. He has moved to runningback for his senior year. Despite his offensive accomplishments, cornerback is his future position. He had six picks as a sophomore, seven last year, and two interceptions at the midway point of his senior year. He is already qualified and lists Alabama, Tennessee, Kansas State, Texas, Texas A&M, UCLA, Purdue, Nebraska, and Notre Dame.

DaBryan Blanton, a 6-0, 170, 4.3 wide receiver from Forney High, is considered the fastest player in Texas. He is the state champion in the 100 meters (10.3) and the 200 meters (20.37, which is fastest in the nation). He plays runningback and had 1,800 yards and 28 touchdowns. He has over 3,000 career yards with 59 touchdowns. He is also a dangerous kick and punt returner. He is considering Texas A&M, Tennessee, LSU, Michigan State, Oklahoma, Alabama, and TCU.

Jerome Brooks, a 5-10, 175, 4.46 runningback from Haltom High in Haltom City, tallied 1,600 yards and 17 touchdowns last year, plus had 188 yards receiving with two more touchdowns. Through six games of his senior year, he has amassed 1,200 yards and 18 touchdowns. Entering his senior year, he had over 4,000 yards for his career. He also plays free safety on defense and some colleges feel he would make a standout cornerback. He has a 35-inch vertical jump and has camped at LSU, TCU, and Oklahoma. He has several schools in pursuit, including Alabama (leader), LSU, Northwestern, TCU, Oklahoma, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Purdue, Colorado, Wyoming, and Louisiana Tech.

Elvis Gallegos, a 6-2, 175, 4.4 receiver/cornerback from Richland High in North Richland Hills, has displayed his skills at receiver, safety, and quarterback. He played receiver last year and snagged 40 passes for 690 yards and five touchdowns. He also plays part-time as a free safety and led the area in interceptions with six picks. His senior year he has moved under center to run the flexbone offense, but is still rated among the top ten receivers in Texas. Some project him as a college cornerback. He runs a 6.4 second 60 yard dash and he is also a solid baseball prospect. He has camped at Texas, Texas A&M, and Notre Dame. Those three schools along with Alabama, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and LSU round out his top seven. The Tide was first to offer.

Albert Hardy, a 5-11, 220, 4.5 runningback from Galena Park High, is district Offensive MVP and all-state and considered the state's number one runningback. He led Greater Houston in rushing with 1,855 yards and 18 touchdowns last year. As a senior he had 238 carries for 1,521 yards and 10 touchdowns. He claims to be similar to his idol, Shaun Alexander. He is already qualified and ranks among the top 10 players in Texas. He lists his top five as Texas, LSU, Alabama, Florida, and Colorado.

Xavier McGuire, a 6-5, 210, 4.55 wide receiver from Carter High in Dallas, is an all-district wideout. He is a three year starter who sports a 36-inch vertical jump, a 4.3 shuttle

time, a 3.5 GPA, and an 890 SAT. He camped at Texas. He had 20 receptions for 250 yards as a freshman, 28 receptions for 378 yards as a sophomore, and 34 receptions for 574 yards as a junior. He benches 255 and squats 350. He is getting looks from Oklahoma, Alabama, UCLA, Florida, LSU (top five), Michigan, Georgia Tech, Kansas, Oklahoma State, Texas, Texas A&M, Colorado, TCU, and SMU. His plans are to leave the Lone Star State.

Reggie McNeal, a 6-1, 191, 4.32 quarterback from Lufkin High, is a two sport dynamo who is destined for stardom in either football or baseball. He is a gifted centerfielder in baseball who will be drafted very high. In football, he passed for 2,100 yards and 24 touchdowns, plus rushed for 900 yards and nine touchdowns. He runs a 10.3 100 meters and a 21.2 200 meters. He camped at Texas A&M (timed 4.32) and is presently committed to the Aggies. However, Alabama, Miami, LSU, and Oklahoma continue to pursue him and he says he might change his mind. If he does, Bama is the likely alternative.

Roshawn Pope, a 5-9, 170, 4.4 athlete from Ball High in Galveston, is a true all around athlete. He had 1,500 yards rushing from the

quarterback position, but most colleges feel he will move to either receiver or cornerback. He is the nephew of Alabama Assistant Coach, Kenith Pope and the brother of Alabama commitment, Derrick Pope, a linebacker. He favors Alabama and Arkansas over Oklahoma, Texas A&M, and Nebraska. He has some academic work ahead in order to qualify.

Vickiel Vaughn, a 6-2, 183, 4.42 free safety from West High in Plano, is considered by some to be the best free safety in the country. He is advertised as a can't miss player who will become an instant starter in college. He posted 72 tackles and six interceptions last year. His choices include Notre Dame, Texas A&M, UCLA, Arkansas, Alabama, Texas, and West Virginia.

Lawrence Vickers, a 6-1, 205, 4.55 runningback from Forest Brook High in Houston, is a four-year starter who gained 980 yards and 15 touchdowns in eight games as a freshman. His sophomore year he had 1,200 yards and 21 touchdowns. He has a 35-inch vertical jump and camped at Texas A&M. He benches 320 and squats 480. He has interest in Texas A&M, LSU, Colorado, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Iowa, and Iowa State.

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2001-2002 Alabama Winter Sports Schedules

Men's Basketball

Date	Opponent	CST
UA Score	Opp. Score	
103	Athletes In Action (Exh.)	77
92	EA Sports (Exh.)	71
	Guardians Classic	
107	Mississippi Valley St	67
83	Samford	51
68	Missouri	75
81	Memphis	70
Nov. 26	Utah (ESPN2)	6:00
Nov. 29	McNeese State	6:00
Dec. 3	Chattanooga (Fox)	7:00
	John Wooden Classic @ Anaheim, Calif.	
Dec. 8	UCLA @ (Fox)	6:00
Dec. 14	Jacksonville State	7:00
	Jimmy V Classic @ Meadowlands, N.J.	
Dec. 18	Temple (ESPN)	6:00
Dec. 21	Alabama A&M	7:00
	Sugar Bowl Classic @ New Orleans	
Dec. 27	Notre Dame (Fox)	7:00
Dec. 31	Florida A&M	1:00
Jan. 2	Bethune-Cookman	7:00
Jan. 5	LSU (Fox)	6:00
Jan. 9	Vanderbilt	7:00
Jan. 12	@ Auburn (Fox)	1:00
Jan. 16	@ Georgia (J-P)	7:00
Jan. 19	Mississippi State	6:00
Jan. 26	@ Kentucky (ESPN)	7:00
Jan. 30	Arkansas	7:00
Feb. 2	@ LSU	7:00
Feb. 6	Ole Miss (J-P)	7:00
Feb. 9	@ Mississippi State	2:00
Feb. 13	@ South Carolina	7:00
Feb. 16	Tennessee (J-P)	2:00
Feb. 20	@ Arkansas (J-P)	7:00
Feb. 23	Florida (CBS)	1:00
Feb. 27	Auburn	7:00
Mar. 3	@ Ole Miss (CBS)	1:00
Mar. 7-10	SEC Tournament @ Atlanta	

Women's Basketball

Date	Opponent	CST
UA Score	Opp. Score	
84	Univ. of Virgin Islands (Exh.)	77
101	Sports International (Exh.)	109
96	Samford	44
101	Troy State	58
	Pepperdine Thanksgiving Classic @ Malibu, Calif.	
90	Louisville	89
79	Pepperdine	81
Nov. 27	@ Birmingham-Southern	7:00
Dec. 2	@ Providence	Noon
Dec. 5	@ Alabama State	7:00
Dec. 9	South Alabama	2:00
Dec. 18	@ Jacksonville State	7:00
	@ Cancun, Mexico Basketball Tournament	
Dec. 21	SMU	7:30
Dec. 22	Eastern Michigan or Maryland Villanova Tournament	TBA
Dec. 29	Massachusetts	Noon
Dec. 30	Villanova or Rider	2:00
Jan. 6	Kentucky	2:00
Jan. 10	@ Arkansas	7:00
Jan. 13	@ Florida	2:00
Jan. 17	Vanderbilt	7:00
Jan. 20	@ Tennessee	2:00
Jan. 24	Auburn	7:00
Jan. 27	@ Kentucky	1:00
Feb. 3	Arkansas (Fox)	2:00
Feb. 7	Mississippi State	7:00
Feb. 10	@ Auburn	2:00
Feb. 14	@ South Carolina	6:00
Feb. 17	Ole Miss	2:00
Feb. 21	@ Georgia	6:00
Feb. 24	LSU	2:00
Feb. 28-	SEC Tournament @ Nashville	TBA
Mar. 3	Gaylord Entertainment Center	

Gymnastics

Date	Opponent	Time (CST)
Jan. 11	Super Six Challenge @ Gainesville, Florida (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, LSU, Penn State, UCLA)	6:00
Jan. 18	Georgia	7:00
Jan. 26	Denver	7:00
Feb. 2	Nebraska	7:00
Feb. 8	@ LSU	7:00
Feb. 10	Auburn @ Birmingham	2:00
Feb. 15	@ Georgia	6:30
Feb. 22	Florida	7:00
March 1	@ Auburn	7:00
March 8	@ Kentucky	TBA
March 16	UCLA	7:00
March 23	SEC Championships @ Birmingham	7:00
April 6	NCAA Region IV (Site TBA)	TBA
April 18-	NCAA Championships @ Coleman Coliseum	TBA
April 20		

Men's Indoor Track

Date	Event
Jan. 18	SEC Challenge @ Fayetteville
Jan. 25-26	Rocky Mountain Cup @ Colorado Springs, Colo.
Feb. 1-2	Meyo Invitational @ South Bend, Ind.
Feb. 10	@ Florida Invitational
Feb. 10	@ Iowa State Invitational
Feb. 22-24	SEC Championships @ Fayetteville
March 1-2	LSU Last Ditch @ Baton Rouge
March 8-10	NCAA Championships @ Fayetteville

Men's Swimming

Date/	Opponent	Time (CT)/
UA Score	Opp. Score	
Oct. 26-27	SEC West @ Fayetteville	All Day
156	LSU	142
85	@ Auburn	174
Nov. 27-	World Cup	All Day
Nov. 28	@ Long Island, N.Y.	
Nov. 30-	Georgia Invitational	All Day
Dec. 1		
Jan. 4	Georgia	1:00
Jan. 12	Georgia Tech	12:00
Jan. 25	@ Florida State	2:00
Jan. 26	@ Florida	1:00
Feb. 2	@ South Carolina	2:00
Feb. 20-23	SEC Championships @ Fayetteville	All Day
Mar. 9	Last Chance @ Auburn	TBA
Mar. 19-	USS National Championships	
Mar. 23	@ TBA	All Day
Mar. 28-	NCAA Championships	
Mar. 30	@ Athens, Ga.	All Day

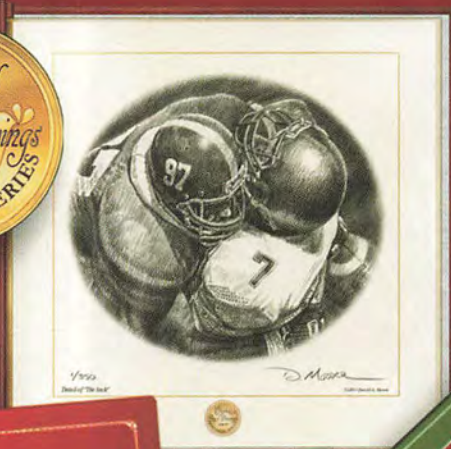
Women's Swimming

Date/	Opponent	Time (CT)/
UA Score	Opp. Score	
Oct. 26-27	SEC West @ Fayetteville	All Day
157	LSU	142
90	@ Auburn	173
Nov. 27-	World Cup	All Day
Nov. 28	@ Long Island, N.Y.	
Nov. 30-	Georgia Invitational	All Day
Dec. 1		
Jan. 4	Georgia	1:00
Jan. 12	Georgia Tech	12:00
Jan. 25	@ Florida State	2:00
Jan. 26	@ Florida	1:00
Feb. 2	@ South Carolina	2:00
Feb. 20-23	SEC Championships @ Fayetteville	All Day
Mar. 2	Last Chance @ Auburn	TBA
Mar. 19-	USS National Championships	
Mar. 23	@ TBA	All Day
Mar. 21-	NCAA Championships	
Mar. 23	@ Austin, Texas	All Day

Women's Indoor Track

Date	Event
Jan. 19	SEC Quad @ Fayetteville
Jan. 226	Minnesota Invitational @ Minneapolis
Feb. 2	Rod McCravy Invitational @ Lexington
Feb. 10	@ Florida Invitational
Feb. 10	@ Iowa State Invitational
Feb. 22-24	SEC Championships @ Fayetteville
March 1-2	USATF - TBA
March 1-2	Iowa State Last Chance @ Ames, Iowa
March 8-10	NCAA Championships @ Fayetteville

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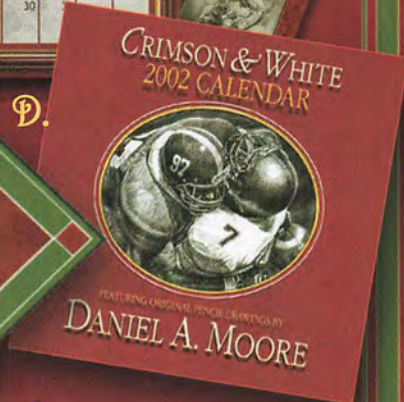


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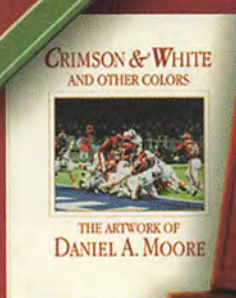
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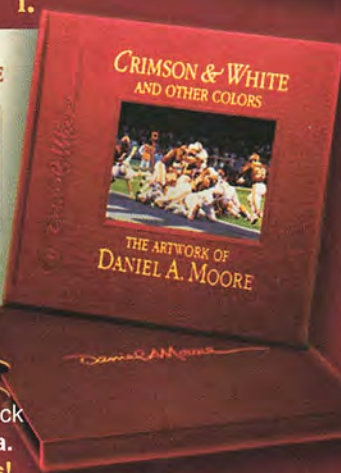
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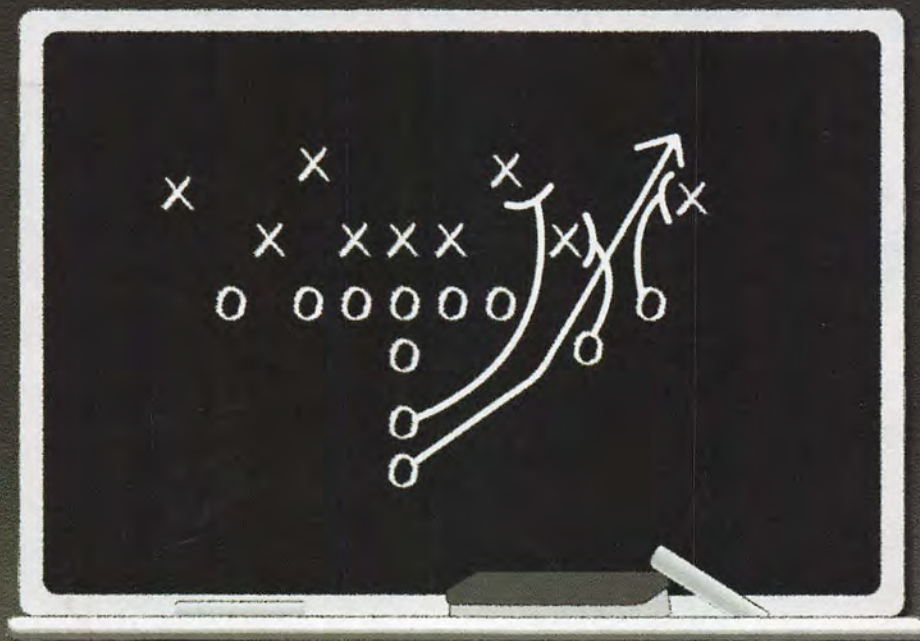
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